Planetary MEDITATION

A COSMIC APPROACH



AJAI BHAMBI

ZODIAC SIGNS

SYMBOL	SIGN	PAGE
Aries - A	♈	38
Taurus - B	♉	41
Gemini - C	♊	46
Cancer - D	♋	52
Leo - E	♌	57
Virgo - F	♍	62
Libra - G	♎	65
Scorpio - H	♏	69
Sagittarius - I	♐	73
Capricorn - J	♑	79
Aquarius - K	♒	85
Pisces - L	♓	89

Zodiac signs given here correspond to page numbers mentioned in the book.

PLANETARY SIGNS

SYMBOL	SIGN	PAGE
Sun - A	☉	59
Moon - B	☽	54
Mars - C	♂	39,71
Mercury - D	☿	49,64
Jupiter - E	♃	76,91
Venus - F	♀	43,67
Saturn - G	♄	82,88

Planetary signs given here correspond to page numbers mentioned in the book.

Times Group Books

Times Annexe, 9-10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
New Delhi-110002

Planetary MEDITATION

Planetary MEDITATION

A COSMIC APPROACH

AJAI BHAMBI

The day I saw the spark of my vision in your eyes,
I knew intuitively now the time has come when they are
going to be realized because without fertile environment
no vision can be accomplished. Nargis, you have been
my source of hidden energy for the last 30 years.
I present this book from the core of my heart to you.

PLANETARY MEDITATION

First published in 2012

by
Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd., New Delhi

Published, Designed & Distributed by

Times Group Books

Times Annexe, 9-10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
New Delhi-110002

Printed at: Brijbasi Art Press Ltd.

ISBN: 978-93-80942-89-6

Price: ₹299

Contents

Foreword

The book *Planetary Meditation* by Shri Ajai Bhambi is reflected upon by different aspects of myself — scientist, psychologist, spiritual seeker but also a skeptic of the esoteric without basis.

It has been written in a fashion that helps weave stories in a logical way — mythology in contextual terms, psychology from a lay person's perspective and self transformation through do-it-yourself but planned approach. The exhaustive theoretical framework creates ample understanding of the astrological background for the reader to understand self not only in a mental cognitive perspective but also from emotional viewpoint. It sets the pace for the reader to delve into their nature, personality and *samaskaras* apart from looking at life from a karmic perspective.

The natural flow of knowledge from knowing the planetary positions in your life, specially *nakshatras* followed by knowledge of yourself, strengths and weaknesses and their place in your life followed by specific techniques for meditation would help the reader digest the knowledge before dwelling on the wisdom gained through meditation.

It is common knowledge that as in everything else, tools for self-growth and spiritual wisdom do not follow the one size fits all dictum. It is quite well-known that while some would benefit from one technique or method of meditation, others would not even be able to connect with it. The background information on *nakshatras*, as exposed in the book highlight their effect on our personality, phases of life and our ability to connect with or benefit from spiritual growth or meditative techniques in particular.

The preparation for meditation, simple techniques of harnessing the power of our breath, easy to follow yet well

defined meditations based on the attributes of a person based on their personality according to *nakshatras* are effectively delineated in a reader-friendly method. The interpretation of often used word *Shar-num* in a new light is interestingly compelling to be with the powers of the universe and feel safe and connected.

In today's world that is full of strife and people are reeling under stress, going within is not only necessary but also therapeutic. It is common knowledge that astrology is often resorted to without knowing its basis and that can sometimes be exploited or feared. The combination of informed astrology and meditatively going within to seek solutions is very welcome.

The challenge would be for the readers to extract the essence from the vast knowledge and condense it into coherent wisdom for themselves. It should then be used as a guiding principle in changing times in life, specially challenging phases to turn it into everyday practice of meditation and reflection. It would then become a life changing experience leading to growth.

I enjoyed reading the book. I am also able to see possible sources of differences in personalities and outlook of the persons one happens to know in public life or the clients having psychological issues with whom I work as a psychiatrist. I can also see another perspective on my personal conversations with others as a spiritual seeker as to why some people connect with one form of philosophy or meditative practices while others move onto different ones.

The book has many things to offer. The intricate details about *nakshatras,* their strengths and weaknesses etc. may be heavy for some but scholarly for others. Yet, the essence as applicable to oneself is interestingly informative. I hope those who read it would not just cherish it as good literature but as a starting point or as a guide in their spiritual journey and personal growth.

Dr. Avdesh Sharma,
Spiritual Seeker & Media Personality, Well-Being Psychiatrist

Preface

I started writing this book on the auspicious birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev. Interestingly, it was completed on another auspicious date — Makar Sankranti, a day when the sun changes course to the northern hemisphere for the next six months. Makar Sankranti is celebrated across India, as also in other parts of the world. According to the Mahabharata, Bhishma Pitamah was lying on a deathbed of arrows for many days, waiting to go to his heavenly abode on the day the sun turned from the southern hemisphere to the northern hemisphere. This analogy seems apt for it seems that perhaps cosmic consciousness has played a role in producing this book.

This book was completed in sixty odd days. The subject matter, however, has been on my mind for the last thirty-five years. Around that time, I met a great luminary of the subject, a contemporary of Dr BV Raman, the Indian doyen of astrology. He had a monthly journal on astrology called *Astrological Magazine* in which scholars would regularly publish their articles and papers. This gentleman, who was also a regular contributor to this great magazine, happened to meet me in my hometown at Gwalior. At the time, I had started contributing articles in local newspapers and was also on All India Radio. This gentleman wanted to assess my knowledge and asked me to read his horoscope when I met him.

We were sitting in the house of one of his relatives and I started interpreting his horoscope; this went on for almost four hours. During the course of this reading the host served us water, tea and snacks. I still remember vividly that I did not take even a sip of water. I focused entirely on interpreting the gentleman's chart. I told him about this birth and also told him

at length about his past birth, and also what was to happen to him in the next birth. He was very happy with my readings and interpretations, and informed me that after checking from Nadi Shastra and Brighu Samhita, all that I had told him was correct. He said I was almost there.

Ironically, this gentleman warned me saying I was going to starve in this life. I was taken aback and asked him why. He believed that in today's world people were more interested in their jobs, businesses, careers, marriages, etc, and if you discussed their past and future birth then no one would consult you. Astrology was a non-starter as a career in those days; worse, I did not come from a family of astrologers. One of my dear friends, ND Pandey, whom we lost some time back, also used to tell me that I was investing all my energy in a career which would not fetch me even Re1.25 per chart. I took offence to this viewpoint, and after fifteen years, when a client offered me a princely sum of Rs1 lakh for a single consultation, I went to see my friend ND Pandey and told him, "See what I have achieved." Pandey politely told me that he had made that statement because at the time people were not paying even Rs. 1.25. As soon as he said that, I felt so small.

During the past thirty-five years, I have had the chance to observe many people from close quarters and have in many ways lived with their experiences. I have seen people get jobs, start businesses, become politicians, industrialists, sportspersons, actors, musicians, scientists, scholars, etc. Most of them are blessed with children, have built huge houses, bought luxury cars, travelled the world; in short, experienced a worldly life of pleasure to the maximum. Today when I look into their eyes I see emptiness as if their achievements/gains have provided them with temporary happiness.

Thirty-five years ago, understanding the world may have been more important, but now I think it is very essential to know yourself. At that time the world was changing, from static to dynamic, but now the pace of change is huge. According to

the ancient Indian approach life was divided into four stages or *ashrams — Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanprastha* and *Sanyaas.* Each of these stages comprised twenty-five years of a person's life. In the first stage, a person is supposed to gain knowledge while observing celibacy. In the second stage, he is duty bound to look after his family and is involved in procreation. The third stage is dedicated for the preparation of the next stage while completing all the pending duties of the second stage. The last stage is when man renounces worldly pleasures and seeks oneness with God.

Today, the dynamics of the world have changed completely. In the 21st century, a person experiences almost all the stages of life in perhaps the first 25 to 30 years of life. A child of ten years is connected with the world and knows precisely what is happening all around. A teenager is completely aware of his mental capacity and therefore it does not take him/her long to experience sex and other pleasures of life. Psychologists say that the age of puberty is now reduced and today's children appear eager to experience the different shades of life early on. It is very strange that man always repels poverty but whenever he is surrounded by riches his behaviour undergoes a sea change. Perhaps that is what is happening across the world. New riches have engulfed all human beings and the old traditions are all but falling like a house of cards.

Today, it appears that society has little or no influence over man. For a long time, religion and society have controlled man but now the dynamics of this relationship seems to be changing. It is said that man is a social animal, that he cannot sustain himself without society. But modern science and technology have given him an option he did not have earlier. As a result, the influence society had on man has greatly diminished, and will probably be negligible in the next 100 years. Media and information technology have given man the means to create his own virtual society; he therefore cares less about the reality that surrounds him. He no longer has to force himself to interact in

a society he does not relate to. It is no longer a necessity for his sustenance. And this applies to friend, neighbours and family! No one is exempt from man making the ruthless choice of his virtual world over reality.

Today's man lives more in the mind and uses his imagination and brain to create a new environment, society and world for himself. The beauty of this world lies in its eternity of changeability, and it can never be reversed. If change happens at an intellectual level alone, it is not enough as it can lead the mind into a chaotic situation. The real change has to happen at the level of consciousness or being. It can only happen if the mind, body and soul are one, all the while moving from one dynamic into another. Whenever change happens at the level of consciousness then the change in self-consciousness becomes one with the cosmic consciousness. This is when man can never go wrong. This book discusses how you can connect with your inner-self and bring about a change within yourself. This fundamental change will help you bring about desired changes in your outer world to help you realize your goals.

According to Sri Swami Yukteshwar Giri the guru of Paramahans Yogananda, Kalyug or the Iron Age ended in 1894, and now the world is already in Dwapara Yug. These calculations are based on the subtle movement of the sun. As we are aware, there are four *yugs* — Satyug, when the dharma or mental virtues are maximum or say 100 per cent. We don't know much about humanity at that age. If humanity was there then they were totally at peace with themselves and strain and stress was negligible. The second *yug* is Treta, where dharma or mental virtues reduce to 75 per cent. If we look back on Ram *rajya*, then 75 per cent awareness was there and people were innocent, enjoying their own awareness. Ram lived the life of an ordinary man, and rose to become God. His relatives and disciples and followers were devoted to him. Raavan on the other hand was a demon but his clan was totally devoted to him. Ignorance or non-awareness was seen only at the level of

Kekayi, one of Dasharath's queens and the *dhobi* who doubted the integrity of Sita. In the Dwapara Age, awareness and ignorance are at par, 50 per cent each. The Pandavas could experience the super-consciousness of Krishna and at the same time the Kauravas were in complete darkness. When knowledge and ignorance are looking into each other's eyes then a great war like the Mahabharata is the only answer. All material and spiritual knowledge was lost by the end of Dwapara Age and we are led into the Dark Age or Kalyug. The moon revolves around the earth and the planets revolve around the sun. The sun also has another motion by which it revolves around a grand centre called Vishnunabhi, the seat of the creative power Brahma, the universal magnetism. Brahma regulates the mental virtues of the internal world.

When Kalyug is fully operational then ignorance is maximum — 75 per cent people of the world live in ignorance and only 25 per cent have knowledge. This trend runs across the world. Democracy has taken centre stage and whenever three people support any issue it becomes law. Numbers matter, not the 'rightness' of the issue. In Satyug, man lives intelligently and is totally compassionate towards animals and nature. Unfortunately, it's just the opposite in Kalyug. Man's cruelty is optimum towards animals and nature. He sees everything from a selfish viewpoint. We entered the Dwapara Age in the last 100 years and it will probably take 500 years to set the real pace of this Age. Man's consciousness is bound to rise because autumnal equinoxes leaves Pisces-Virgo and enters into Aquarius-Leo around 2499 AD. Then the world will enter the new Age of Consciousness. This book is an effort to prepare man for the New Age of Consciousness.

In this book meditation techniques are designed on the basis of a person's birth nakshatra or constellation. We call this Nakshatra Meditation (NM) technique in this book. *Nakshatras* (constellations) are spread all over the sky and are visible even to the naked eye. At the time of one's birth, the *nakshatra*

visible at that time becomes the person's birth *nakshatra* for the rest of their life. The influence of *nakshatra* is immeasurable on each and every individual. The NM technique connects a person with their birth *nakshatra* in a profound way. The birth *nakshatra* gives a new dimension to a person's infinite being. When one continuously meditates on their *nakshatra,* it opens up the hidden qualities of a person's being. The real meaning of meditation is to withdraw your senses and mind as Jainism suggests. There is another way of going beyond your senses and mind to connect with eternal consciousness. The NM technique lifts one's being from the ground and puts the person in the sky where their *nakshatra* is located. Once in the sky, the entire cosmos belongs to you and you can become one with cosmic consciousness.

The writing of any book is never an entirely solitary experience. And the same holds true for *Planetary Meditation.* During the writing of this book, many people have supported me unconditionally. It is difficult to mention everyone but I would like to mention Brigadier SC Thareja (retd), who walked with me during the course of writing this book. And, Chandra Mohan Madan, who used to enjoy my discourses on our early morning walks. His one-liners were extremely useful. Sunaina, my able neice, who helped me edit the first part of the book and did a commendable job. Dr Avdesh Sharma, spiritual psychologist, who was kind enough to write the foreword. I remain indebted to him.

I am also indebted to Sanjay Bhatnagar, Madhulita Mohanty, and Dilip Singh from The Times Book Group for their support in bringing out this book.

Ajai Bhambi
May 2012, New Delhi

CHAPTER ONE

What is Meditation?

Before we talk about the concept of meditation, it seems appropriate that we focus a bit on the towering personalities who have made meditation a buzzword over the years. Their lives seem to have flowed like the rivers — Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati and Brahmaputra that — start their journey from the Himalayas and then merge into the ocean. Many great yogis come to mind in any discussion on meditation and meditative practices. These include Krishna, Buddha, Mahavir, Patanjali, Ashtavakra, Nanak, Jesus, Mohammed, Lao Tse to name a few. All these great men began their life's journey like other ordinary human beings but it is their meditative approach that transformed them into gods of the universe. It is these meditative practices that raised their compassion to godly levels. The good news for us mortals is that all these great men developed simple meditative techniques for us to follow so that future generations and we can easily learn them and liberate ourselves from karmic bondage forever.

It is very strange, rather a mystery, that none of these yogis ever followed each other's techniques. In fact, some of them were totally unaware of the other's existence. And yet, every individual technique is available for us to choose from. Over centuries, many more people have attained enlightenment, but whether they did so using the same technique is not known. It

therefore raises a doubt in the mind: Is there really a technique? If so, what was the need to develop so many different kinds of techniques by so many different entities? At the same time, it is difficult to believe that so many techniques were created by mere chance. All these questions add to the mystery that surrounds meditation and meditative practices.

Every soul or *atma* is a unique identification for the universe (*parmatma*). Before taking form, and after the dissolution of form, the soul merges with the universe as if it was never separated. But whenever a soul takes form, then *ashta tatva* —fire, earth, air, water, ether (*aakash*), mind, intellect, ego — play a very important role on this planet. This becomes a unique experience for all the souls who transform into human form. Similarly, to take the example of the rivers, they were one when they were part of the Himalayas. They flow as separate rivers from the mountains, but merge once they meet the ocean. But every river has its unique identity and journey. The beauty of the journey is in the individual experience. No two rivers share the same experience. Every river has to take its own course and protect and nourish the ecology, environment and mankind along the way. Similarly, these different energies of God are there to help mankind — at different places, with different ideologies, different philosophies, different faiths, and different understandings — to help liberate mankind from karmic bondage.

Form of Meditation

The world resides in the mind and the seed of the mind exists in the consciousness *(chitt)*. The moment ripples begin in the mind, the world starts taking form. When the ripples stop, one can experience his real self which is also known as *sachitananda*. It is a state of motionlessness without waves. It is a state of synchronization and this happens when time and speed of both the individual and the universe become one in space; and this is a state of motionlessness or stillness. In psychology, this state of

being is known as the state of zero. The state of zero compares with Brahma which is *chitt* or fundamental consciousness. Meditation is not a process involving activity; on the contrary, all activities must cease in order to be able to meditate. In a non-meditative state, the mind is full of thoughts which find release through words and actions. During the meditative state, all actions of the body, speech and thought come to a halt and the mind becomes rippleless and calm. This state of mind is known as meditation. All practices of meditation are to train the mind and body but when one gets into a meditative state or *dhyana awastha* then it comes automatically. The moment one thinks of doing something, or, alternatively, of an activity, the mind begins to operate and this creates problems. In a way, meditation is a process of not doing anything; when one is ready to abandon all thought and move beyond the mind, only then can the meditative mode be achieved. The problem with man is that he only understands the language of action because in his world nothing can be achieved without doing something. Man believes that action is the cause of his achievement and, therefore, God will also be discovered in the same way — through some action-oriented exercise. However, it is only through meditation that one finds ones own self (God), which has always been present in us. There is no way to search for Him because He exists in ones being. The moment the mind is motionless, without ripples, at that very moment man reaches a deep meditative state and transcends himself. That is meditation.

There are many activities in this world which are not driven by human hand; they happen because existence wills them to happen or controls them. Man is neither capable of doing them, nor has he any control over them; he cannot stop these activities from occurring. For instance, breathing 'happens'. Similarly, human being has no control over hunger or sleep, life and death, love and tears. All these processes simply 'happen'. Similarly, meditation happens when the right environment is made available. The 'thought' of meditating is an obstruction.

However, when meditation happens, one can become weightless and experience it. That is why no readymade definition exists. In a way it is a non-doer activity but one has to be totally aware of it. The trouble with human beings is that he wants to put everything within his defined framework.

Ashtanga Yoga

Maharishi Patanjali, in his unique book *Patanjal Yogasutra* — Yogdarshan, has described the eight limbs (*ashtanga*) of yoga. They are *yama, niyama, asana, pranayam, pratyahar, dharna, dhyana* and *samadhi.* By following Ashtanga Yoga, all kinds of impurities that the soul gathers due to ignorance during its sojourn, are eliminated, darkness is dispelled and light or knowledge emerges and the soul receives enlightened. In this state, the soul realizes its oneness with the universe, and Man — in whom the soul dwells — comes to know about his mind, intellect, senses and all other activities which made him a part of matter or nature. By following Ashtanga Yoga man gains knowledge and his ignorance ends. In the end, only truth, light or knowledge remains. In this process he realizes his consciousness and becomes pure and with this purity he gains ultimate knowledge or nirvana. Here is a brief explanation of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga:

YAMA

Yama is the first limb of Ashtanga Yoga in which Patanjali explains that man should purify himself from outer influence. He further explains that as the conduct of man improves his mind starts gaining purity and he gathers good values. There are five types of yama:

> ***Ahimsa* or Non-violence** can be explained in many ways but Patanjali describes it entirely differently. He explains that not killing somebody is not non-violence. It is the thought which comes to the mind, or the words that a person speaks that become violent. So the seeker has to work at that level.

Truthfulness: The yogi should follow the path of truthfulness. Whatever he sees, hears or experiences through his senses and mind must be reflected as the truth. If the truth is unpleasant, hurts or harms anybody, then he should exercise restraint and observe silence. He should not say anything that would make people uncomfortable and his actions should not be violent.

***Astyeya* or Non-stealing:** While explaining *astyeya* Patanjali says that one should not practice deceit, fraud, or dishonesty in order to appropriate someones material goods because that would be stealing. Accepting what does not legitimately belong to you is also stealing. For instance, accepting bribes, misappropriation of funds, tax evasion, wrong billing, etc, fall under the category of stealing.

***Brahmacharya* or Celibacy:** The word *brahmacharya* is made up of two words: *Brahma* and *charya*. In the deeper meaning, *brahmacharya* is following the conduct of *Brahma* or the path of purity. Another meaning of *brahmacharya* is a state of celibacy, ie, even in thought and speech. One should abstain from getting into physical intimacy while following the path of Ashtanga Yoga because it can act as an obstruction in journey towards the union with God.

***Aparigraha* or Accepting things from others:** A seeker or yogi should follow a life and conduct of purity. One should not accept money or material goods in excess of what one requires because that also deviates ones mind from oneness itself.

When a seeker follows these conducts he purifies himself from outer influences which enable him to delve further into the path of righteousness (*sadhna*).

NIYAM

Niyam or cleanliness is the second limb of Ashtang Yoga. There are five duties which a yogi has to perform under *niyam*. These are cleanliness, contentment, austerity, studies on self, and complete surrender to God. When one follows the five *yamas* one is purified from the outside; when one observes *niyams* then one is purified internally.

Shauch or Cleanliness: One should maintain cleanliness of body, mind and speech, ie, shauch. These *niyams* include cleanliness of body, clothes, house and in the method of earning money, and also purity of food in how it is cooked and eaten. *Niyams* also extend to purity in inter-personal dealings.

One should maintain purity of thought and be friendly towards others. At the same time, one should eliminate attachment (*raag*), aversion (*dwesh*), jealousy (*irsha*), hatred (*ghrinna*), and anger (*krodh*). These are all negative emotions or internal impurities and should be eliminated. In Sanskrit it is called *shauch*.

Santosh or Contentment: The second *niyam* is *santosh* or contentment. It implies, in essence, that one should live within ones means and with total satisfaction or contentment. After performing ones duty, whatever that may be, man should be content. He should not follow his lustful desires blindly and, at the same time, should limit them or restrain them. There is no room for desire (*kaamna*) and thirst (*trishna*). One should not be envious of others' possessions rather one should be content with ones achievements. By following this, desires calm down.

***Tap* or Austerity:** Austerity or *tap*, ie to undergo self-modification, should be followed by a yogi to get rid of impurities and purify the body at a subtle level. The mind governs the action of the body and the senses. Since the mind is restless the results reflect in man's actions and senses. If the mind becomes stable, then the

body and senses also calm down. Whenever a yogi performs *tap* or austerity the mind reacts, which is why pain and discomfort can be felt at the level of the body and the senses. Tolerating these discomforts is called *tap.* Knowingly torturing ones body or senses does not come under *tap* or austerity. According to Patanjali, *tap* or austerity should happen in a natural way and this should positively impact the mind. If one can follow the path of austerity without giving much importance to body and senses then one can purify the body in a different way. This is why the bodies of yogis are proportionate, healthy, clean and shining. By following yoga *sadhana* one can purify the body and mind; all the toxins of the body are released. To tolerate all this peacefully and with calmness is called *tap*. By following this, the senses and the body come under total control and the yogi climbs new heights.

Swadhyay or Study of the scriptures of self

This is the fourth *niyam*. The literal meaning of *swadhyay* is knowledge of texts; knowing oneself and doing mantra, *jap*, repetition of mantra, and remembering ones God or deity. By practising this continuously a yogi can experience the presence of his God and his deity which guides him towards the path of liberation. Although liberation is a self-attained experience, a Guru or deity can help man to remove obstacles in his path of self-realization. By experiencing closeness with his deity, the yogi is encouraged to go beyond his path with greater enthusiasm. All seekers, whether *bhaktas*, devotees or yogis, need the help of their deity to move ahead in the path to realization.

***Ishwar Pranidhan* or Surrender to God:** This is the fifth *niyam* which indicates one who completely surrenders to his God. In turn God takes care of His disciple completely. Whenever one surrenders to God without any desire, he becomes eligible for attaining *samadhi.* In the state of *samadhi* the yogi can destroy the seed

of desires and get into a seedless *samadhi* or oneness with God. The surrender to God is the most important aspect of *yama* and *niyam*.

Sixfold Enemies

According to the *Bhagavad Gita*, an individual himself is his own friend and his own enemy. Further, Krishna says, man has six enemies (*ripu*). If other people become inimical then their enmity can be traced to the root of their activities; but Krishna says the real danger of man is man himself. These six *ripus* are:

Kama or desire
Krodha or anger
Lobh or greed
Moha or delusion
Madh or Pride mixed with arrogance
Matsarya or Jealousy

Beside these six *ripus*, man has three additional confinements. First is the confinement with outer influence and due to this man drags himself into the outside world. The second confinement is 'I-ness' or man's 'I', the ego. Due to overindulgence, man usually forgets his real self and starts believing that he is just a body. The third confinement is the mind itself. When a yogi starts doing *yama* and *niyam* then his three attachments or confinements and six *ripus* or sixfold enemies stop troubling him. When his practice continues then he can get rid of them completely.

ASANA

In yoga it is essential to control the wandering mind. The source of these wanderings is the mind itself. When the mind is fickle, thought processes are unending and this ultimately influences the body as well as the senses. Which is why, when you watch people around you, they unknowingly fidget and are constantly doing something. These thoughts are so deep-rooted that they do not leave the person even in his sleep. If a person can sit like a statue

then his thought process will stop gradually. To perform *japa* or any achievement one has to make the body constant. Patanjali suggests that when a yogi can sit in any posture without any movement that comes under the category of *asana.* Generally, there are three types of *asanas* that are considered the best — *sukhasana, sidhasana* and *padmasana.* While performing these postures one should make sure that the spinal cord is erect which helps the flow of energy throughout the body. When one can stay in an *asana* for a long period, without creating any movement then that becomes a true asana. Further, Patanjali explains, while sitting in these postures one should relax the body and gradually calm down all thoughts and start concentrating on the deity.

According to us, if a person can sit in any *asana* for at least three hours without any movement, knowingly or unknowingly, he has mastered the art of that posture which is also known as *sidhasana.*

PRANAYAM

After learning *asana,* one can start *pranayam,* which means when the breathing movement ends one is able to control the pattern of breathing. After performing *yama, niyam* and *asana* the fourth limb of yoga is *pranayam.* Besides *pranayam*, Patanjali explains another process of breathing. After controlling the pattern of breathing one can perform *purak* or the process of filling up the lungs through inhaling; *kumbhak* or the action of retaining breath in the lungs; and *rechak* or the process of evacuation of air from the lungs through exhalation. Patanjali also explains that after learning *asana* not only does the body become inactive, but its impact can be felt on the mind, senses and breathing. When the body-mind awareness is totally focused on some point then one learns *sidhasana*. Torturing or forcing the body by retention of breath is not called *pranayam*. When a yogi, with effort, performs this process of *purak, kumbhak, rechak* and takes deep breaths he detoxifies and purifies his blood and calms his mind completely.

Patanjali adds that *pranayam* is a complete science in itself and says that if the yogi sticks only to *pranayam*, he will be able to understand the mystery of the world and become one with God. He clearly points out that the forceful stopping of inhaling and exhaling cannot be considered *pranayam.* When the movement of breaths automatically stops, that is *pranayam*. Therefore, *pranayam* itself is not a process. Rather, it is an achievement.

PRATYAHARA

The fifth limb of yoga is *pratyahara* or withdrawal of the senses. Withdrawal of the senses from external objects is known as *pratyahara.* After learning the art of *pranayam,* the mind becomes stable and starts to focus on its deity. Gradually, the senses stop running out and merge within. Similarly, a tortoise, after sensing fear, withdraws its body into its shell. In the same way, our senses start withdrawing from outer objects. Although they do not self-destruct, they start identifying with the inner self; this process is called *pratyahara* or non-attachment. After achieving this state the mind loses all worldly attraction, and finds oneness with the self. This entire process is not considered meditation, but it does alter ones thinking completely.

Before achieving the state of *pratyahara*, the senses are out of control and only driven by self-gratification. However, after achieving *pratyahara*, the seeker decides where he wants to put his mind. After learning the art of *pratyahara* one is no longer influenced by these senses. There are five organs of perception. Five subtle organs for vision, audition, olfaction, gestation and cutaneous sessation of touch, pressure, coldness, hotness and pain; each subtle organ for perception has a gross organ — eyes, ears, nose, taste buds in the mouth and skin.

DHARNA

Out of the eight limbs of yoga described earlier, the first five limbs are connected with the outer world. After learning the art of the first five limbs, the Kriya Yoga comes at the end. After attaining

this state, action ends and non-action begins. The three basic limbs of non-action are *dharna, dhyana* and *samadhi.* There is very little difference among all these. When the mind stops moving, outwardly involvements comes to zero; they come under the total control of the yogi. The mind becomes one with consciousness at this stage. The last achievement is known as *kevalam* or ultimate. Further explaining this *sutra,* Patanjali says, when *chitt* stops wandering, it behaves like a domestic animal. It is the same energy that earlier ran for worldly objects; it now wants to be one with the ultimate. Now the mind can be put at any point and remain there; for instance, one can focus on any part of the body and stay focused. One can even be one with the sun, moon and stars. When one learns the art of focusing the mind on one point, according to choice, that is called *dharna.*

DHYANA

During the process of *dharna*, the mind is focused on a single point for a long time. When the mind begins to dissolve in that process and becomes one with the whole (universe), that is considered *dhyana*. Primarily, the difference between *dharna* and *dhyana* is that one is concentration and the other is meditation. During meditation, man's thought process comes to an end and the senses become one with that. *Dharna* purifies the mind completely while in *dhyana,* the ego submits to the ultimate.

SAMADHI

During the process of *dhyana* and *dharna*, the mind is focused on a particular object and moves in that direction constantly. When it remains in that state for a longer time and becomes one with that, and forgets even the whole process and becomes zero, only *dhyay* (an idea or object on which the mind meditates) *matra* is left; this stage is known as *Samadhi*. *Samadhi* is not a process but an achievement. In this whole process man forgets himself completely, and becomes one with his God or Universe.

Therefore, it is said *dhyana, dharna* or *samadhi* are not processes. These are three non-actions and one has to witness the whole process which takes place without the doers.

The modern dictionary meaning of 'meditation' is: 'A devotional exercise of contemplation', or 'the act of engaging in deep contemplative thought, or to concentrate on one thing or nothing, having emptied the mind of all thoughts, especially as a religious exercise or a means of achieving spiritual enlightenment'.

The present day scenario of great stress or tension, the busy schedule of events demanding great precision in human activities, and the mechanical race for materialistic ideals, dictate and demand a change in the value system and lifestyles of human beings today. The stress of life is to be eased to lead a happy, healthy and progressive life to develop positive thinking so that this may put us in the eternal circle of happiness.

It was rightly said after the great experiences of the six-year-long Second World War, that man's mental strength, under conditions of stress, is superior to his physical strength. A ray of hope, a positive thought, or a word of cheer from a colleague can quickly motivate and lead us to putting our best foot forward in any demanding situation.

From time immemorial, in times of difficulty, man has looked up to the heavens, to that supreme power of Almighty God, for solace and guidance. Prayers are linked to every aspect of human activity, and sooner or later, one starts looking inwards. Introspection reveals to us our inherent strong mental powers, and indicates our potential to deal with obstacles in life. Slowly, with a little training of the mind, we tend to become more conversant with the hidden powers of our mind, the natural gift of the Almighty to all human beings. Then comes the stage of realization that we really have the powers to prevent stress, to reduce the existing stress levels, if any, and to develop a happy and stress-free environment for our regular healthy natural growth.

These unseen powers of the mind are present in every human being, one has only to learn the act of realizing these.

As per the Indian system, at the appropriate time of life, the blessings and teachings of a guru (personal teacher who is devoted to teaching the disciples) can easily teach the disciple, who is truthful and equally devoted, the art of calling the powers of the mind at will. In short, the guru can inculcate the great strengths of the mind in the disciple. After this stage, the development of these powers are a matter of 'faith and regular *abhyas*' or the practice of the learnt technique.

Finally, we arrive at the term so commonly associated with religious sects, 'meditation'. As discussed, meditation is just the technique or art of laser focusing our mind, the human organ which utilizes the maximum amount of blood supply and free oxygen for its normal functioning.

The winner, whether in sports, professional life, public life, war, etc, has to win the mind first. Since the power of the mind far exceeds physical prowess, we have before us a clear picture-that to succeed one must make every effort to tap the full potential of the mind. A very interesting anecdote comes to mind to illustrate the point I make about clarity of mind. Swami Vivekanand, India's most venerated holy man, was once challenged by a friend to address and hit a golf ball. Swamiji rightly asked for a demonstration, and after observing keenly and with a little focused thought, performed a practice shot and then showed a perfect swing hitting the ball to the desired spot.

Another interesting and challenging aspect of a successful journey through life is listening to the ever-changing calls of your heart. The human heart is designed, or we can say programmed, to raise several ever-changing demands on us. We all have regularly experienced this, whatever the occasion, be it for a materialistic gain or for an emotional requirement of love, solace or peace; our hearts continue to make varying demands.

Now, the most interesting aspect of our personality is before us: the relationship between our mind and our heart. This is perhaps the single most important factor which governs not only our general conduct, but controls our complete personality.

This leads us to the most important fact of life — the *atman* or soul is above the heart and the mind. Irrespective of religious faith or imposed logic, if we are prepared to resolve the main conflict of mind and heart with this divine power or force, we are in control of our own selves. A person who can conquer ones own self is on the path to conquer the world.

This experience felt or realized accidentally on ones own or with the teachings of a guru can be developed to reach higher levels. The process of self-realization or attainment of the ultimate bliss is called meditation. How simple it can be, or how attainable it can be, is again discovered only by meditation — the introspection and self-realization of the great potential which we have inherited and all the gifts we have naturally received from the Almighty. Once we learn to concentrate, to focus, or to connect to our inner selves, or even to firmly fix our thoughts to any single item, we are in a state of meditation. We can resolve all our inner conflicts, we can raise our mental status, attain higher powers, receive regular inflow of energy, and be true masters of our own selves, not only in this life, but in the continuum of many lives, the true divine process of evolution, the Grand Master has planned for us.

True meditation will give us not only a conflict-free, stress-free life but will enrich our life to a higher level of human values, human pleasures, sharp memory and lead us to divine life or perfect bliss in this very life, which is the only one we know.

For further details of the techniques of meditation, customized to meet your requirements, depending on your very personal *nakshatra*, the following chapters will be useful to make the complex subject a simple one. Have faith, be confident, follow the path of true divine love, and just move ahead on the path to divine bliss.

CHAPTER TWO

Alex's Story

Alex is a successful executive working in an MNC. He has a beautiful wife and two lovable children. He also owns a house in an upscale colony and has the best cars money can buy. It is almost as though Alex is breathing and therefore life runs through him. All his achievements are directly connected to his attention. To achieve his target he had to use all kinds of existing *mudras*. Often, for more focused results, he might have invented new *mudras*. Had Alex not been self-aware, he might not have achieved so much.

Mudras are used by artists, especially dancers, etc, to perfect their art. All musical instruments also require the musician to invent new *mudras* that are unique to that particular instrument. The same theory applies to all electronic gadgets or machines that require different postures and/or actions on behalf of individuals in order to master that machine or gadget. The same applies to sport, where specific body posture and movement is required in order to acquire the necessary skill in that sport. In line with the same principle, yogis invented the *yoga mudras* using various parts of the body like hands, fingers and other organs. Generally, *mudras* are associated with certain poses and movements of hands, feet and face. However, if we look at every individual, we will discover each person has a unique style that is distinct and different from any other person.

Every individual uses their hands, feet and face in expressing *mudras* so uniquely that they develop a personal style and unique personality. Thus, a person's movement becomes incomparable to anybody else. Over time, this becomes a style personality or *mudra,* as we would like to call and understand it. The same way Alex has his own *mudras* which he uses every single day of his life. Alex has created a place for himself which provides him enough space to feel at home. He is a successful man and has been moving towards success his entire life.

Sachin Tendulkar is an icon and cricketer par excellence. He is known throughout the world. Alex is one of his numerous fans. He keeps track of Sachin's records and wants him to do well all the time. When Sachin is playing and nearing a new record, or is about to complete a ton, one needs to watch Alex then. His breathing is varied (depending on the situation on the field) and he remains glued to the television. At this point, Alex will not sit still; he will, instead, be making all sorts of gestures, along with much shouting, screaming and jumping. His awareness is what makes the entire episode very lively and vibrant.

Aamir Khan, the famous movie actor and producer, is also a die-hard Sachin Tendulkar fan. But Aamir hardly gets the time to watch Sachin play. When he knows he will miss a match, Aamir ensures the game is recorded so that he can watch it at leisure. Aamir knows Sachin very well and tries to watch him play whenever possible. While watching Sachin Tendulkar in action, Aamir is very often a motionless spectator. It is as though he is watching Sachin scale new heights, leaping from one mountain to the next. Aamir always learns something new from watching Tendulkar's awesome game and he admires that extra special quality in Sachin. Sachin Tendulkar also keeps a keen record of Aamir Khan's activities and his achievements; in turn, Sachin also wonders about Aamir's greatness and silently learns from the actor's many plus points.

There is a vast difference between Alex and Aamir Khan's approach towards their hero. Both enjoy the game of cricket and both love to watch Sachin Tendulkar play. While watching the maestro in action, they experience the same emotions of joy and sorrow. Alex works for his immediate requirements and Aamir challenges himself to achieve even bigger targets. Alex also enjoys Aamir Khan's acting and movies. He loves Aamir Khan's multifaceted personality and admires his focused mind. Alex has many heroes and anti-heroes in his mind and he keeps shuffling between his many heroes from the past to the present.

I can recall an incident with former prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, soon after the defeat of India's youngest prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi. Vajpayee was narrating the incident of Vishwanath Pratap Singh's oath-taking ceremony for the post of prime minister and the honour he got after defeating Rajiv Gandhi who had the best mandate of Independent India till then. Rajiv Gandhi was meeting everybody at Ashoka Hall at the Rashtrapati Bhavan at the tea party soon after the oath-taking ceremony. He was at his cheerful best and charmed everybody with his confidence and smile while congratulating the winners, although it must have been very painful and difficult for him internally. During this time, Vajpayee was admiring Rajiv Gandhi's dignity in the face of adversity and went on to state that a man should be like him. So much can be learnt from this incident.

Prana, dhyana, mudra and *chetna* always give the desired results. The moment *shakti* is put in *prana* it becomes *Prana Shakti* or lifeforce. When one becomes one with *dhyana* (attention) it leads to the next stage of meditation. When one begins to ponder over questions using the *mudras*, or actually begins to make ones own then *mudra* becomes an art. This probably could be the best culmination of *mudra* into art because it keeps evolving. Deeper awareness or *chetna* takes one towards new heights of consciousness.

All super achievers of this world know how to make the best use of these four vital elements — *Prana shakti* (lifeforce), *dhyana* (meditation), *mudra* (art) and *chetna* (consciousness). They know the secret of this mantra and it's the ladder through which they arrive at their achievements. Buddha became one with *Prana shakti, dhyana, mudra* and *chetna* and therefore became a part of the total consciousness which he then used for worldly achievements and that is why Buddha alone represents the consciousness of this universe.

CHAPTER THREE

Interpretation of Zodiac Signs

Mystery of Zodiac Signs

The sages of ancient times have tried to demystify the zodiac signs after keenly observing the zodiac from various angles. Each sign can be deciphered and analyzed in four ways:

SHAPE OF THE SIGN

Each sign is made of thirty degrees and total zodiac is measured as 360 degrees. A sign comprises two and a quarter *nakshatras* and the length of a *nakshatra* is 13 degrees and 20 minutes. Each *nakshatra* is made of fixed stars and two and a quarter *nakshatras* put together gives a shape to the stars which can be seen with the naked eye from the earth. There are 27 *nakshatras.* The names of the signs are given according to the shape they form like Aries — Ram, Leo — Lion etc.

SYMBOL OF THE SIGN

Signs and symbols have a special place in the evolution of human communications and consciousness because the subconscious mind is similar in all the races. Each symbol has a hidden meaning in it and it is a manifestation of how man reveals himself. Symbols reveal the manifestation of the

universe and man and each symbol has different things to offer and reveals the many layers of the human being.

ELEMENT OF THE SIGN

The entire universe is made of five elements and so is the human being. There is a saying in Sanskrit *"yat Bharhmande tat pinde"* (Universe and Man are made up of the same elements). Every sign is made up of a certain element and these elements bring out the hidden qualities of that sign.

PLANET OF THE SIGN

All signs are ruled by certain planets. Once we have an understanding of the planet then we can follow that sign thoroughly. The energy, force and manifestation of the planet is also revealed through the particular symbols. By deciphering the symbol of the planet we can understand the vastness of the planet. When a sign is deciphered under this light then it gives a different meaning to the entire possibilities.

Aries — The Adventurist

SHAPE — RAM

Aries is the first sign of the zodiac. The animal assigned to it is the Ram. If you observe a Ram, you will notice abundant energy in it. It is full of freshness, purity, agility and beauty. The Ram has the ability to transform himself into total action or aggression. As a matter of fact an innocent person can get into action without bothering about the consequences because only a complicated mind refrains from action because of consequences. Only a manipulative mind knows the right and wrong of his action whereas an innocent mind acts first and thinks later. That is why he is innocent. Perhaps he is left with no other choice than action. When thought is absent action can create wonders. Sometimes there are demanding situations in life where pure thought can only produce disastrous results and

action is the only saviour. In emergencies and where a thin line of difference exists between life and death, only action can produce desirable results. In the midst of crisis intuitive action is the best answer. If actions are governed by intuitive wisdom, then they have the potential to produce desired results.

Sometimes an individual under the sign of Aries can imprison himself in his own ideas of getting liberated without weighing the consequences. Therefore, he has to learn this in the course of life and control the urge to conquer in all situations. Unless and until he taps his energy and demonstrates it with intuitive wisdom only then can he achieve his goals. His extreme inquisitiveness always forces him to explore new horizons for himself.

Arians are action oriented people. They are bestowed with leadership qualities. These qualities are those that are required to squarely face the challenges in life. Challenges get thrown in our way all the time, yet every human being is not willing to accept them. It requires a lot of courage, confidence and aggressiveness to put yourself in such a situation and come out victorious.

The ram's basic weapons of fight and self-defense are its horns. One of the primitive weapons of warfare were horns, claws, teeth etc. As the horns are located on the head, therefore, it becomes necessary to fight with the horns but also with the head. There will be no real effort to save oneself, since the only option they took for it was do or die. Those who are ruled by this sign seldom think about the consequences. If it is their day, they will be winners, while at other times they may be losers.

This is the basic danger Arians carry throughout their lives, as there is a threadlike difference between illusion and intuition. Intuition is governed by higher intelligence, which cannot be reasonable all the time whereas illusion is wrong judgment and lacks the discriminating ability. If instincts are used correctly then they can prove to be a pathfinder.

SYMBOL — A

The symbol of Aries is a vertical line divided on the top with branches moving like two arcs of a circle. It looks like a pair of horns of a ram or a goat. Although this symbol looks very simple but it has a great hidden meaning in it. The vertical line which goes upward equally on the left and right, denotes two forces of the universe: positive and negative. The germinating seed lies in the latent force of friction that contains negative and positive energy.

At the very outset this line gives an indication that the basic forces are at work and there is readiness of energy to create something new. The vertical line which gets bifurcated at the top represents the initial stage of germination or sprouting.

The two arcs, spreading out on either side of the vertical line in a semi-arc, also look like a hook, or an anchor or a fork. The hook has multiple uses and is essential in the initial development of man. A hook can lift heavy objects using a stable and perfect technique and a least amount of force. Mountaineers use it to scale heights, without using much force and with the maximum safety. If thrown upward it digs itself into mountainous land enabling the climber to haul himself on the rope. The anchor provides a base to the mighty ship. It is a symbol of stability and rest.

The symbol also resembles a fountain: the two arcs being the water spraying outwards. A fountain could be interpreted in many ways, but the inherent purpose of a fountain is to release something from its latent base to the surface with tremendous force. There seems to be an abundance of desire to bring joy and happiness with its newfound glory. Here glory is conveyed through action. The fountain also has the capacity to create a new environment and engulf the atmosphere by its pure energy.

In other words, this sign denotes growth and development taking place. The basic impulse of life lies in an ongoing process where energy is in abundance, waiting to express itself in different forms of creation. The energy seems to be having an

inherent struggle to liberate itself from a dormant situation. What better way to express itself other than growth and development?

ELEMENT — FIRE

Creation and fire are interconnected and dependent on each other. Fire was the beginning point of the universe. The first source of fire of this universe is the Sun which produces fire, heat and light and ultimately knowledge. Fire has its many forms and the day man learned to tame fire he became civilized.

In Aries, we see fire which is primitive, raw and ready to be utilized. This fire is not known for its refined qualities. If the direction is right, a primitive fire can do wonders, otherwise it can destroy its owner. In Aries, fire means passion, energy and dynamism but without a focus. People born under this sign have a tremendous force in themselves. They are daredevils with leadership qualities capable of accepting challenges but invariably they have an inherent fear also. Fire always beckons danger but in primitive fire the danger is more.

Fire was given tremendous importance in all the ancient civilizations of the world. Vedas are full of praise for fire and considered sacred in all its forms. Even a jungle fire is useful, not only does it burn the useless plants but also helps in planting certain seeds which take root because of this fire. Human body operates because of heat or fire and the moment it goes down; it becomes a corpse. When man dies, it is fire that preserves the energy in a new form. We need strong *jathragni* or heat in the stomach to digest food. Fire has many forms but can be mainly distinguished into two. One is destroyer and the other is creator. The ultimate quality of fire deciphered by the Vedas is knowledge. Aries is the first sign of the zodiac and without the help of fire, zodiac and the world cannot be created.

PLANET — MARS — C

The symbol of Mars is of a circle with an arrow emerging, aiming towards infinity. Primarily, the symbols of signs and

planets are indicative of different forms of universal energies. Each symbol is perfect in all respects and brings out the hidden positive and negative inherent qualities of that planet. These symbols are not ordinary and cannot be casually interpreted.

The symbol of the Sun has a dot in the centre of the circle, which can be interpreted as an atom. This makes the entire glyph extraordinary. In the present symbol of Mars the atom has become enlarged and taken the shape of a circle with an arrow jutting out. The arrow could not be of any major consequence had it not been attached to the atom. It gains tremendous energy once it is supported by the atom. The arrow is aimlessly directed towards the sky and is poised at penetrating or influencing anything that comes in its way. The arrow is also in a position of readiness to take on any challenges, which it may come across. Astrologically, the planet Mars is an ultimate force to reckon with. It has been blessed with two universal forces — the positive and the negative. If energy is used positively, then it turns out to be a lifesaver. On the other hand, if energy goes into the hands of a negative source then it becomes destructive. The symbol of Mars speaks volumes on its unlimited force, which can be used for the well-being of the world if correctly directed. Nevertheless, one should not forget that it has a devastating force which needs to be checked well before triggering it off.

The arrow upwardly directed towards space gives an impression that energy is ready to break the shell and move towards externalization and carve a permanent and independent niche. The cosmic impulse, which emerges from the planet in the shape of the glyph, suggests that this energy is being used for non-personal purposes. The pointed arrow is also indicative that should there be a need the energy is ready to bring about a paradigm shift with its scissor-shaped knife. An apparent aggression seems to be involved in the whole process. It can happen in mundane, everyday affairs or can achieve definite divinity in the realm of a spiritual path. The ultimate goal of

Mars is to bring out the new out of the old decadent system and that is what the symbol depicts.

Taurus — The Doer

SHAPE — BULL

Taurus is the second sign of the zodiac. Two and a quarter constellations assigned to this sign make a picture in the sky which resembles a Bull. In each civilization, through the evolution of man, a Bull, the cow and the horse have been termed very useful animals. Animals such as these have been like helping hands throughout existence. In its own way, the Bull has played an important role in the growth of humanity.

If one keenly observes the Bull then one finds a contented committed and carefree animal who is in its own world. Unnecessarily he does not harm anybody but people are in awe of it and at the same time attracted to its strong personality; it evokes a certain attraction and also fear. In olden days there was a practice which still continues that a Bull was worshipped and respected; worshiped because it was helping in procreation. The Bull was used for mating purposes. The Bull is also known as Nandi — Shiva's vehicle — on which Shiva moves around. The statue of Nandi is situated in every temple of Shiva and it is worshipped by women who want to have the experience of motherhood. Therefore it has both social and spiritual importance.

SYMBOL — B

We come across two symbols one of the sign and another of the planet and if one observes keenly then there is an interconnectivity that gives due meaning when we decipher. The geometrical symbol of Taurus is a complete circle and on top of it an arc is attached. The circle is an important symbol, which has been used in various forms, right from time immemorial and can be interpreted in many ways. The circle represents the wheel or movement of time. Since there is no point or atom-like

force involved in this sign, it clearly indicates the material side of the human being. The absence of atom in or around it does not bestow it with divinity, selflessness.

The growth of any civilization is directly related to the invention of the wheel, which has made a huge impact in the development of the world. It is difficult to imagine the world without a wheel, because then life would have been stagnant and unmoving. With the invention of the wheel, a momentum was induced and from then onwards life kept gaining rhythm and pace. A wheel is capable of carrying big loads by using a minimum amount of energy. A wheel also makes life musical and poetic.

Another symbol of this sign is the mighty Bull. Look at the glyph: it resembles a face with horns on the head. A bull can carry heavy weights from one destination to another. A circle may look complete but a lot of training, imagination, system and organization are required to make it perfect and useful. A circle has the capacity to generate a tremendous amount of energy but only after the mechanism is understood and then put to use. In the same way, a Bull is a disciplined force once its energy is unified. A Bull can do wonders if its force is properly channellized. The basic nature of energy is to move outwards and, if directed well, it flows towards accumulation or materialism.

The other important feature of this glyph is an arc attached on the top of the circle. This resembles two horns. In symbolic representation; any vertical line or arc directed towards the sky, has a special meaning. Whenever energy starts flowing towards the heavens, it does not remain personal any longer, because a special kind of universal force starts emerging out of it. If we look attentively at the entire symbol of this sign, it represents the face of the bull with two horns. The horns not only make the bull look beautiful; they are also his might which make him aggressive. For the bull, the horns are the weapons of attack as well as defence. Very seldom does a bull get into a fight, but

once it does, then it will fight with all its might and energy, unmindful of the consequences.

ELEMENT — EARTH

The element of Taurus is earth. The basic qualities of earth are that it is practical, solid, reliable and passively active. They are very receptive towards new ideas and if they appeal to them then they get motivated and put all their energy in it. Inspiration is the keyword and when motivated correctly then can perform unattainable jobs. On their own they can turn into a state of laziness or self-undoing. Although their keenness towards materialism and possessions is immense but to acquire all that certain motivational forces are required.

They preserve their energy and strength and do not waste it unnecessarily. They prefer to maintain conventional behaviour as far as possible perhaps they feel that they identify themselves better and feel rooted with their own basic nature. They are practical scientists who concentrate with efficiency and skill on the universal phenomenon of material universe. Sometimes their vision is limited and prejudiced. They are required to overcome this deficiency to operate or perform on a bigger canvas.

At times their poor initiative coupled with mistrust and uncertainty does not allow them to do big things in life. However, if they get convinced and overcome their basic inertia then they can do wonders. Out of all the signs of the zodiac they fall under the category of doers. When they start cracking on something there is no stopping till they achieve their target.

PLANET — VENUS — F

The glyph of Venus is rather simple. There is a complete circle and below the circle hangs a cross. There is a great significance within the simplicity of the symbol of Venus. In astrology different planets are bestowed with specific qualities and the symbol denotes the optimum force they are born with. While

discussing the planet or explaining the hidden meaning of symbols we are actually trying to know the universal impulses attached to different planets and symbols. These symbols have the potential to represent the latent force and energy of a particular planet once they are demystified objectively.

The circle is an extension of an atom which has been observed earlier too. Everything on this planet moves in a circle, whether it is a life or the Universe. Although, at times it may seem as though no two things or events have any similarity, once observed very closely they are connected internally and this chain ultimately ends up in a circle. Perhaps this is the reason when the Eastern people first invented the zero; it gave a new dimension to the sphere of mathematics. The zero has the capacity to add value to the optimum and subtract it to nothingness. The value of zero in arithmetic opens up a Pandora's box of materialism and if the value is taken off, then the sojourn of spiritualism begins. There could be many ways of self-realization but the best method is to enjoy the worldly pleasures to the optimum, then drop them one day and go beyond. In astrological parlance, Venus rules over sensuous pleasures and enables man to experience them at every level of his being and see the worthlessness of it one day. Then is the time to look for ultimate pleasure which is beyond the senses.

The glyph of Venus is extremely significant and the positioning of the cross hanging downward adds colour to the entire symbol. Whenever there is a cross hanging downward with any symbol it provides extra importance at a very personal or a subjective level. Whoever has performed any great feat, either in materialistic or spiritual world, has first thought of himself. The world and mankind have followed later.

Venus is planet of love, enjoyment, feelings, talent, art, music, dance, poetry and all kinds of creative activity, which makes the world more beautiful and attractive. Venus is also known to crave for the best things of this world and possess them ultimately. If somebody wants to build a beautiful house,

mansion, palace or anything luxurious or comfortable then he is thinking of himself. If you want to have a beautiful wife or a handsome son, then it indicates purely subjective aspirations. Similarly, you want to own a beautiful car, garden or anything which adds new lustre to your life, then it is only for you, not for anybody else. It is altogether a different thing that your beautiful house, car, garden, wife, son etc, also attract the world. Beauty is meant to be appreciated by everybody. The importance of the cross makes the glyph of Venus extremely significant because primarily you want to be the owner of the best thing on earth, but they attract everybody and ultimately become the property of this world; so nothing remains personal forever.

Gemini — The Dualist

SHAPE — TWINS

Third sign of the zodiac indicates extension of oneself. In Gemini, the picture seen in the sky comprises two and a quarter constellations looking as if two human beings are embracing each other. Seen closely, this picture gives us an impression of a male and a female in perfect union.

In Gemini, energy has taken the human form and is posed to create. The two human beings of Gemini are in the copulative position and the sexual union witnessed in the Gemini sign is in its purest form. This is the position where both the male and female energies, the yin and yang, Shiva and Parvati, come together. The union of two different poles is the indicator of creation. Therefore, Geminis are innovative, full of new ideas and concepts. Once a thought strikes them they will not rest until they put it into action. Once they are entangled in their web, then even non-practicality may take over and the results can be disheartening.

An innovative mind knows no boundaries. Those who are imaginative or creative, tend to get rigid with their thought process. A Gemini person can be rigid and behave stubbornly on

certain occasions. Gemini is also a sign of duality. This duality is purposeful, only if the analytical faculty of the mind is used. Duality can provide a penetrative view of an issue, bestowing the person with fine perception. However, at times duality creates confusion and irrational approaches too. Amongst the many advantages of duality is that it gives a knack of mastery in many arts at the same time. A true Gemini enjoys getting involved in multifarious activities at the same time. He or she may be involved in ten activities and aiming at an eleventh simultaneously. There is no doubt that Geminis are experts in their attempts, but at times they end up messing up and seldom know how to get out of it.

SYMBOL — C

The glyph Gemini contains two vertical lines which are covered horizontally at the top and the bottom. These vertical lines resemble two universal forces, ie, positive and negative. There seems to be a compelling need to connect with each other. If we look more attentively, then the two different forces symbolize a man and a woman, as if ready to unite with each other. Although there seems to be a reasonable gap between these forces, their eagerness to merge into each other is certain. Gemini also denotes a male and a female in a position of readiness to embrace each other.

Whenever male and female energies have a deep urge to reach out to each other, it makes the union extremely meaningful. There is a basic need in all of us to reach out to the world and express ourselves in totality. Gemini is the first sign of the universe where the inherent need to communicate with others is tremendous. We find a deeper meaning to this glyph of two vertical lines which represents two human forms and which clearly suggests that both of them are in a position of readiness to express their subconscious mind, which could be full of feelings and emotions. To understand something from the core of the heart, one needs to share it with someone who is equally

understanding. There cannot be any better geometric symbol then these two vertical lines, which represent adult energies of the male and the female. Perfect communication cannot take place unless two people are on a perfect wavelength and vibe beautifully even on the psychic level.

The irony of communication is that it implies both the positive and the negative aspects; therefore, a certain duality occupies centre stage. Duality creates the possibility of interpretation and so it never allows a perfect communication despite the best efforts and intentions of each other. A Gemini struggles throughout life to reach out to the world but within himself, the person is in conflict. Despite constant efforts to polarize the different forces of attraction and repulsion, duality persists forever. The symbol of Gemini also looks like the Roman numerical two — II. This itself defines the duality of this sign where inconsistency can be seen in feelings, ideas and certain reactions. This leads to a conflict between objectivity and subjectivity. So, a constant war continues between the conscious effort to reach out to the outside world and the inner mind. Despite all this, Geminis make valiant attempts to remain objective.

The vertical lines of this sign are closed horizontally on both ends. These lines indicate possibilities which are infinite, whereas the close horizontal lines denote the finite. So the tremendous possibilities always have a limitation. If Geminis understand the meaning of this glyph, they can infuse a lot of practicality in their life.

ELEMENT — AIR

The third sign is Gemini which is a twin, nature sign. In astrological terminology it is called a dual sign. The lord of this sign is Mercury and the element is air. We have been talking of zodiac signs beginning from Aries. In Aries we imagine the situation of a person who starts his journey from the caves, from the mountains, to come to the plains in Taurus and from there

moves on. The moment you are in the plains, the desire is to walk, to run and ultimately to fly. Air is the element that helps you to fly. The first flight of mankind is through thought. First, you fly through thoughts, then you fly physically. In the Vedas it has been said that the word *shabd* took its birth in space and travelled through air. The word is the core of our communication. In this sense, Gemini is an important sign because it enables the person to express himself, which is a basic need of every human being. Without statement, our life seems meaningless, futile and directionless. Communication gives us an aim and a purpose.

In the beginning of civilization, communication took place through air. Now in the 21st century, there are many ways to communicate — one can communicate through the sea, through the ground, through the mountains. However, basic communication through the air still remains very valid and will remain so for centuries to come. Gemini's element of air is directly connected with thought or communication and since there is an inherent desire in all of us to express ourselves, through some form of communication or the other, this sign is very important. Now, one thing, which is happening here, is very, very relevant. The nature of this sign is duality. As said earlier, thought is created in space and travels through air. From there it comes to the ground and become a reality, with its duality intact. The inbuilt duality does not disappear. Each thought contains something good, and something bad. If there is a day, there has to be night. Duality sustains both in thought and in reality. This sign plays a big role in the communication we have had for the last 2000 years. As this is the sign of logic, reasoning and thought. When thought takes place in space, it is of dual nature and even when the same thought is brought to earth, the duality does not disappear. Hence, all thoughts in this world are of dual nature. Until and unless they are refined and judged, they have to go through a process. Duality helps in growth, because if the answer is one, you stop questioning. We

keep on questioning because answers could be different and moreover, there could be more than one answer. In the nature of thought, duality is inbuilt and is very important for the growth of mankind. But one big hazard of this thought and logic is that logic creates many miseries. Moreover, thought has its own attendant problems too. With thought comes rigidity, because the moment it becomes somebody's thought, another person starts objecting. People who are born under this sign are rigid and sometimes they lose the sight of reasoning and logic, thus becoming very stubborn in their approach. A drawback of this sign is rigidity and an inability to move away from motives.

PLANET — MERCURY — D

From this planet onwards, the glyphs start becoming complex. The geometrical symbol of Mercury can be divided into three parts. In the centre is a circle. On these circles are two spectacular antennas, coming from different directions. Below the circle is a perfect cross.

The glyph provides ample food for thought and it can be interpreted in many ways. While interpreting the unparallel authority of the Sun we have realized that the dot which represents the atom has given unassuming power to the Sun. The same atom has also bestowed Mars with tremendous energy. In the glyph of Mercury, one notices that atom remains large as in the case of Mars, but with a radical difference. It is very important to keep in mind that through the symbolic science of different signs and planets, the aim is to understand the universal impulses of the different signs and symbols and the latent energy involved therein. Here the atom has become large and taken the shape of a circle and on top of it the two antennas are attached. It is believed, right from time immemorial, that all ideas, plans, schemes, thoughts and imaginations are directly connected with the sky. If one has to catch the waves, vibrations or electromagnetic currents from space, the perfect receiver is the antenna. It is very strange that

even in this age of science, antennas are the primary source of communication as they were in ancient times.

Basically, Mercury, the planet of logic and reasoning, has taken the burden of carrying out all communication that happens in this universe. The two antennas which are marvelously synchronized in their shapes and sizes represent two different patterns of logic and reasoning: the positive and the negative. The glyph of Mercury depicts this phenomenon through these two different antennas.

Another important factor of the Mercury glyph is the cross which is attached right below the circle, right in its centre. The cross has a spiritual meaning. The importance of cross has been realized by mankind right from the beginning and it is being used by many religions and civilizations with minor but subtle differences in size and shape. There are two different, universally binding factors in mankind — one which belongs to sound and the other which belongs to symbols. The sounds of *Om* and the cross are universally recognized and accepted. The greatest example is of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ and the cross are so interwoven that by just looking at the cross, one feels peace within and a sense of deep spirituality. The cross represents humanity, compassion, kindness, completeness, and if one delves deeper, then also salvation. In temples as well as mosques, the same symbol is used but with a slight difference. Other religions of the world have also used the cross in various, subtle ways. It has been used as sign of distress and help. Ambulances have used this symbol and so have the doctors and health institutions. Whenever man is in distress, either physically or spiritually, the cross can help regain lost energy and faith. In a war situation, a cross is used as a symbol of cease-fire and as well as a force to fight the fatal epidemic. The attachment of cross below the circle provides great value to the entire glyph of Mercury since the cross has a multifaceted significance.

Whenever somebody gives importance to his views and airs them, he is defending himself or wants to be heard by

others. This is because he understands the finer points of his own logic. Perhaps, at the deeper level of his being, he thinks that his understanding shall not contradict that of others. If logic and reasoning are used, argument will cease at some stage or the other, and wisdom will take over the reins in a conflict-ridden mind.

Cancer — The Emotional

SHAPE — THE CRAB

In the fourth sign of the zodiac, the image that we see in the sky resembles a crab. The crab is a very industrious animal and works like a one-man army. It can hide itself well on the surface as well as under water. Water plays an important role in astrology because it represents emotions and feelings. When they want to, Cancerians can display their feelings so powerfully that they can mesmerize others. But at the same time, they have also mastered the art of hiding their true feelings and emotions with perfection. So, they behave according to the demands of the situation.

The crab is known for carrying his home on his back. Cancerians are extremely resourceful and have a special affinity with their home and folks. Most of their time and energy are invested in creating a nice and comfortable home. They are overprotective about their near and dear ones. This trait invariably frustrates other people around them. Cancerians are natural parents/guardians. They can cross any limit to look after their children with the utmost sense of duty; they are natural providers.

Emotions play a very deep role in the personality and make-up of Cancerians. Their emotional perception of people or situations is more or less perfect. However, they suffer from occasional bouts of anxiety and at times even become hysterical if they lose perception. They can also get easily carried away. At times they get influenced by wrong judgments and suffer heavily.

Cancer is the sign of feeling. Cancerians are marvellous with their anecdotes and story-telling abilities. Their past also plays an important role in their lives. They recollect past events with a great sense of joy and one can see a sparkle in them when they elaborate a short story into a long one. They also have the ability to arouse emotions, feelings, drama and an element of surprise here and there. However, they are very strong in their considerations. In a love situation they turn out to be great givers. Normally they avoid committing themselves but, once they do commit, they try to fulfill their promises. The emotive side of their personalities is very strong and they have the rarest of abilities to ease out the emotional stress and burden of others. At times, their presence creates a powerful aura, which is not easily explainable. Some of them have the innate talent to become natural psychic healers.

SYMBOL — D

The geometrical symbol of Cancer is of two complete circles forming two arcs and making a semi-circle, one of which turned upward and other faces down. Look closely and you will see that the first impression this glyph gives is merging of male sperms with the ovum. It denotes a pulsating life force, on the verge of fertilization. As it is, Cancer is considered a cosmic womb, which is in the position of readiness to create a new and different world. Cancer also denotes the sign of growth because it represents universal motherhood, the main aim that the ongoing process of life should not stop at any time.

The glyph of Cancer, made of two small circles attached with a semi-circle, can be easily depicted as breasts. Breasts are commonly associated with attractiveness and growth. Beauty and attractiveness apart, breast is a potent symbol of life-giving energy. It signifies 'giving'. Since the initial task of a giver is to collect or create, there is a tendency to accumulate. The best donation may be to distribute joy and happiness. An empathetic heart should be overwhelming with feeling, desire and energy

that constantly flow outward. Cancerians work for well-being of others as a protective force.

The crab is another symbol of the Cancer sign. A certain amount of complexity and mystery is involved with this small creature. Being aquatic, it has in it the water element, which deals with the emotive side a human being. The crab is quite comfortable on land, since it keeps a perfect balance between the emotional and practical side of its personality. The glyph also suggests the attempt at balance. The eyes of crab shine. This represents aspirations, beside many other things. From certain angles, the glyph also looks like a pair of binoculars or spectacles. It is said that a crab keeps shedding the hard crust of its body. This phenomenon denotes that Cancerians are always on a look out for new ideas and keep reinventing themselves. The inherent desire for change is so intense that it keeps them on their toes throughout their lives. Just as one school of thought believes that change is a philosophy of life, flowing with the stream is always a great way to live.

If we look more closely at the Cancer symbol, we find that the shape in which the energy moves is oval and it is not very smooth. Uneven energy indicates inherent uncertainty. Although essentially Cancerians direct their energy towards their goal, but if they are not able to zero in to the destination, then they allow it to go waste. If the desired target is not achieved, uncertainty looms large; almost becoming a behaviour pattern. A certain lack of interest and deviation from the target can be noticed easily in Cancerians. Since the level of their energy does not diminish, new outlets are searched for and a new force is induced. This inherent spirit of never-say-die is an inbuilt characteristic, which enables Cancerians to find a new path all the time.

ELEMENT — WATER

Cancer, the fourth sign of the zodiac, is the cardinal sign and the element is water. The beauty of water is in its flow. A river is

beautiful because it flows. A pond does not seem so beautiful because it is still and its expanse is limited. A river grows through a consistent process of renewal, hence, it is always fresh, full of life, music, energy and poetry. In Cancer, we imagine water in Ganges, which, coming from Gangotri, goes to meet the ocean. Any river originating from its source goes dancing and travelling hundreds of miles to its destination — the ocean. Water has a lot to do with our emotions and feeling which too, are ever-changing. Psychologists say they believe if one remains in one emotional state for more than three months, then there is a danger of his/her becoming edgy. Water as an element helps us to shift from one emotion to another. Today we can be angry, tomorrow sad and on another day very happy. Then there is silence, followed by an outburst. These different moods are helpful for our survival, for the relationship we enjoy and for our evolution and growth as emotional beings

Water comes after air as far as the elements go. The connection between air and water can be underlined by the fact that air is responsible for rains. Clouds travel through the air carrying water. When these clouds burst against a mountain, it starts raining. The water from mountains comes to the plains and gradually to the rivers before reaching the ocean. This is a process: water from the sea goes into the sky, from the sky it falls to the mountains, from there it comes to the plains. Also we do not remember everything. This human ability to forget is also attributed to the Cancer sign and the Moon. This ability helps us to be happier for if we remembered everything about our past, we would certainly have been miserable.

PLANET — MOON — B

The symbol of the Moon is a semi-circle. We all know that the Moon derives direct light and energy from the Sun and illuminates the world. If the Sun is the lord of the day, then the night belongs to the beautiful Moon. The Sun denotes the infinite source of light and energy, wherever the Moon

represents the finite source of the same. In astrology, the Moon represents the mind or subconscious being. The night is beautiful, comfortable, silent, harmonious and glorious by itself and does not need to compete or try to become like the day. The half arc of the Moon clearly indicates that night is making all the efforts and losing its harmony in trying to be a day. The inherent tension of the half arc is to become full. Perhaps this is the reason that most human beings are restless, perturbed and unhappy with their circumstances, wanting to become something which is not possible. The Moon represents this restless mind. But the trouble with the human mind is that it is most uncomfortable in the present circumstances and always aspires to something else, something far off, that which may be unattainable. The mind is the source of all imagination and creation. This enables man to enrich himself with unending thought process. The phases of the Moon denote change and suggest that every thought can culminate in completion, provided it is nourished and nurtured. The manner in which the new Moon starts its journey, till it becomes a Full Moon, is an indication that all ambitions and aspirations can be realized.

Moon is the most mesmerizing and mystical planet, deeply connected with the psychic development of an individual. The psyche of man works on varied dynamics. On the one hand, he is deeply attracted towards power and materialism and puts his total energy into accumulating as much as possible. There is a deep-rooted lust in him, which never allows him to be happy with his achievements; he always craves for more. Perhaps discontentment is the nature of mankind. The arc of the Moon's symbol has two different points — one goes upwards towards the sky and the other downwards. Worldly pleasures, gains, and materialism can be attributed to the lower arc of the symbol. However, the ever-rising higher point indicates the inner desire of the mind to cool down, be at rest and understand the divinity involved. The spiritual urge is another fantastic need of the mind. There is an inherent desire of the mind to operate on these

two different levels: one is worldly and other is spiritualism. The ever-changing phases of the Moon have a deeper impact on human psyche; it is very difficult to focus on a single issue for a long time. Due to this drawback, the mind keeps wandering and seldom achieves the target towards which total focus and energy had been concentrated. Since the phases of Moon are ever-changing, vulnerability of mind is invariably exposed. If one can control the fickleness of the mind a lot can be managed in life. The same formula is applied on the sojourn of spiritualism; if one can go beyond mind *moksha* can be achieved in one single birth.

Leo — The Loner

SHAPE — LION

If one observes a lion closely then it looks different from other wild animals. It has no parallel. The lion is bold, courageous, confident, contended and innocuous to one and all. It lives in its own world and nobody dares to come close to it unnecessarily. A lion's action arouses out of necessity. Otherwise it remains passive in its den sometimes to the extent of utter laziness.

Lion is bestowed with a highly sensitized natural force which has a tremendous impact on the psyche. The lion possesses great courage and electrifying energy concealed within it. This inner vitality makes it the ruler of the jungle. The lion's patience and endurance are not matched by other animals. It makes 21 attempts and then he succeeds in killing his prey and even after these numerous failures he doesn't lose his patience. This is a primary quality of a ruler that is why he is called king of the jungle.

Its giant personality and beauty give a royal impression. The lion does not waste its vital energy unnecessarily; it copulates rarely and only for the purpose of procreation. It is totally self-centred and remains focused on itself. The lion thinks that the world is a stage and people of this sign also treat the world as a stage where they should perform. They love drama and the

moment the stage is set they play a role and then when they step down they are unconcerned about the world.

SYMBOL — E

Observing the geometrical symbol of Leo, we notice a complete circle attached to an upward, slightly slanting arc which at the end, curves a little to the right. This glyph begins with the circle going upward in musical rhythm and comes down to end in a flourish of an upward trend. It depicts a life-force, which has realized its potential and is making an upward journey of self-realized truth. In the end it bends completely, but its force is still independent unchallenged. If we look more closely, we will notice that something is bending on its own, just as a branch laden with heavy fruits starts touching the ground.

The circle can be interpreted in many ways. It indicates that some phenomenon has achieved its optimum. In mathematics the circle is represented by the zero which has an infinite role. As a matter of fact nothingness is the beginning of a great sojourn of something. The nothingness (zero) is necessary because only then it evolves and becomes infinite. Once the hidden treasure is understood, then zero becomes hero. A true Leo goes through this process and only then his life begins. The total glyph of this sign indicates someone very determined someone who has achieved the target and then his energy begins to flow as an independent stream, without any demand or aim.

Leo is the fifth sign of the zodiac and is governed by the Sun. Its universal symbol is the lion. The lion has been associated with the psyche of man for a long time. It is the ultimate force to reckon with, which rules not only the jungle but our hearts as well. Its tremendous power denotes that subsequently all of us are looking for a position of omnipotent and the lion metaphorically fulfills1 most of our hidden desires. The geometrical symbol of this sign also shows that the energy of Leo is not totally self-directed. At times of destruction, a Leo likes to devastate others and exhibits uncontrolled ego. Since

the symbol is not in even shape, it indicates that if a Leo needs to employ wrong methods to achieve and maintain supremacy, he may do so without much hesitation. As long as the objectives are realized the means are not of great significance. Also, rise and fall are very much a part of a Leo's life, depending on which wavelength its energy is flowing.

ELEMENT — TRANSFORMED FIRE

Leo is the fifth sign of the zodiac. It is a fixed sign and the element is fire. The lord of this sign is the Sun. This fire is a transformed fire; it had got no resemblance to the fire of Aries, which is primitive and directionless. The fire that ignites the Leo sign is a distinguished fire, full of direction, self-charged energy.

The sign Leo represented by the lion presents a picture where ego, pride, honour and assertiveness have gone so deep into the system that superiority has started emanating from the human personality. The determined fire in Leo indicates that ideas, ideals and morals are so deep-rooted that they make a person assertive, confident, risky and to an extent, a daredevil. Leos are also prone to dramatic representations, because within themselves, they have the need to attract others towards themselves. On the more subtle side, Leos also understand that this world is a stage and everybody has to play his role; so they play theirs to the hilt!

Many times Leos get so involved in playing their roles that they start losing their objectivity. Nevertheless, Leos are made of a never-say-die spirit and their leadership abilities soon have a positive influence on others. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons that the lion is the king of the jungle and every other being of the animal kingdom revolves around him. Just as in astrology, all the planets revolve around the Sun.

By the virtue of its position, the Sun being the focal point and the element being fire, Leos are enabled to muster all their energy to the fore, especially when they are decisive about something. The Leo sign coupled with the fire element provides

a weapon by using which, it can spread its influence to a huge extent. Suddenly one starts feeling special and dominating attitude becomes a strong undercurrent. A feeling of 'I' or ego needs a statement which is only possible once the authority is established and people around him start giving due support. If others start surrendering, Leos feel great and do whatever is possible for their followers. On the plane of ego Leos do go through upheavals and dilemmas; to keep pace with the 'I, me, myself' attitude which can become quite perturbing at times. However, on the whole, a feeling of superiority remains intact in them and they are quite happy about it. The redeeming aspect of this sign is that the fire of Leos is self-controlled and the source of their fire is the soul. Anything which comes from the soul is eternal and unchangeable; nothing can disturb it as it is so self-organized.

Leo being the fifth sign of the zodiac is also connected with the womb, with creativity. So here the fire creates energy; a self-directed energy, which cannot be distorted by external elements.

PLANET — SUN — A

The symbol of the Sun comprises a circle and right in the middle of this circle is a perfect spot. The circle is extremely important because it represents nothingness, which is also referred to as a zero. The beauty of a circle is that it can be interpreted in many ways. It can be called a state of completion where nothing can be added to or subtracted from. There are two different schools of thought. One, which interprets the world of nothingness and the other, which believes that the world is the only platform which provides plenty of opportunities to fulfill all ambitions and desires.

The symbol, which is a circle with a perfect dot in the centre represents an atom. The presence of an atom in the centre of the symbol gives a different meaning to the glyph of the Sun. The universe is made up of atoms and these are the sources of energy and life. If the glyph of Sun consisted of only the circle, then it could be confusing but the atom present in it makes it

extremely potent. It is a known scientific fact, that life is revolved around the atom, and we in astrology believe that life is possible in areas where Sun rays penetrate the earth. Perhaps that is why the Vedas treated Sun as a God. It is difficult to find any ancient culture or civilization in the world where the Sun is not praised or worshiped. The symbol of the Sun, the circle, represents the absolute; therefore the Sun should be referred to as an absolute manifestation of the world. Kings, head of States and administrators of various regions come under the influence of the Sun. All such people derive light and energy from the Sun. Without the blessing of the Sun, it is not possible for anybody to remain at the helm of affairs for long. The Sun has the capacity to 1 tremendous confidence and courage in a person to face challenges squarely.

Under the influence of the Sun a person develops an inner understanding and is able to realize a psychological harmony within. The moment one realizes that he is capable of conquering the world then a feeling of inner satisfaction creeps in, which frees man from all psychological bondage. The circle is also the symbol for infinity, in perfect shape; without a beginning or an end. The real achiever put forth all his life energy to reach the target, without bothering about the consequences. Once he reaches the zenith of his achievements, he wants to create a universal harmony. It is also strange that winning the world remains the target but if one has not achieved that, real satisfaction remains elusive. Spiritualism can be an answer to this feeling of vacuum. At this point, more than anywhere else, the symbol of Sun that comprises the circle which denotes nothingness, becomes most meaningful and one starts striving towards being a fraction of infinity.

Virgo — The Humane

SHAPE — THE FEMALE

Virgo represents a complete female human form. In Virgo, we see a mature woman who has not experienced her womanhood

or sex and is completely chaste. A woman who is waiting to become complete and willing to experience the fullness of her youth, if all her expectations are fulfilled.

Since Virgo completes half the circle of the zodiac, it indicates that humanity takes the upper hand and service to mankind is a sparkling trait. Virgos are full of servitude and are firm believers in relationships. Virgos are extremely selective in relationships and take their own time to get involved. Perhaps they are aware of that elusive truth that getting into a relationship is easier than parting. For a Virgo, parting is very difficult since the significance of relationships goes deep into their system, they will go to great lengths for people they are involved with.

Virgos are generally evolved souls or at least they make genuine efforts to grow spiritually. There is an inner desire in them, not only to be humane but to be constant givers. However, when Virgos are negatively charged then they become selfish and use all possible reasoning and logic for their own benefit. Since their mental faculty is in good reckoning always, they have the advantage to use it either way, to suit themselves. Once they are on the destructive path, then they can destroy many along with themselves.

The adult, mature female as the Virgo sign, indicates future dreams. Virgos are full of new ideas; they are highly innovative and have absolute confidence in their creativity. A true-blooded Virgo will do proper homework; use all possible pre-analytical tools available, before expressing ideas. Virgos are blessed with the flair for expression. They have flawless and charismatic ways of expressing themselves with which they can keep an audience spellbound.

Virgos are also fully aware of their limitations. They can produce very good results as subordinates. They are the best guides available. They love to go into minutest details of projects. They can be good scholars, advisors, counsellors etc. One inherent difficulty with Virgos is that they try too hard at

too many things and hence cannot master any one thing. If somehow they can learn the art of discrimination they can also become very good bosses.

SYMBOL — F

The glyph of Virgo is rather complex. There are three vertical lines which are joined at the top with each other and there is another line which resembles a serpent whose tail forms a cross with the last vertical line.

This geometrical symbol easily resembled like small 'm' of the English alphabet but it has also been coiled by an additional line, which is tucked into the tail of the last vertical line. The symbol of this sign represents energy which is flowing in certain directions but it is the tucked-in tail which creates confusion. There seems to be a desire to perceive the world differently. A youthful innocence is quite apparent but the additional coiled line makes Virgo the virgin quite sceptical. This phenomenon is so deep-rooted in Virgo that it does not allow him to open up. They always have a wait-and-watch attitude. Looking more closely at the symbol, a pattern of continuity is present since all the vertical lines are interconnected with each other. This indicates that constant efforts are put in with total awareness, without getting perturbed by failures or criticism.The inner desire to experience something new is so intense, that it does not end without tasting the ultimate, the consequences notwithstanding.

The Virgo is depicted as a virgin, who is in a state of readiness to give away her virginity so that she can experience womanhood. Once virginity is lost there is the possibility of motherhood. Virgo is the only human sign of the zodiac. It represents female energy in totality. It is fully ripe and ready to yield fruit but it takes very long for find her destination, because she has to address her reasoning before she accepts new challenges. Her curiosity has to be totally satisfied. Nothing seems to be easy for her as she will not compromise until a

perfect balance is achieved. Once her confidence is restored, questioning ceases and Virgo flows on.

In this glyph of Virgo, we notice that the coil ends, forming a small cross at its tail. This is an indication that Virgos do not take very long to start losing interest in worldly pleasures. They start taking deep interest in spiritual pursuits. This also suggests that nothing seems to be easy for them and a constant conflict is inherent. If a person belonging to the sign of Virgo gets entangled with any logical fallacy or some sort of pseudo intellectualism, he or she starts losing his or her inborn creativity. On the spiritual plane also, the Virgo tends to be extremely precise and loves to go into minute details, exploring all the hidden facts and is keen to share his or her wisdom. Virgo should beware of overindulgence as it can do more damage than any significant gain.

ELEMENT — DUAL EARTH

The sixth sign of the zodiac is Virgo. Its nature is dual and its lord is Mercury. And the element here is earth. In Virgo we come across a duality in earth. When we understand the fixed nature of earth, then our thought process is very clear and there is fixation of purpose, like the Taurus sign. But in Virgo the duality of Earth gives a different psychological meaning. The psychic energies which rule over this sign clearly indicate that thoughts and imagination need to go through the test of reality, before they become a doctrine. In this sense, Virgo holds a special position in the zodiac, because no thought is clearly understood until and unless it has reasoning, logic and a universal approach defining it.

In Gemini as we look at earlier thought has an in-built duality; it is re-examined and put through the test in Virgo which is ruled by the element Earth, known for its practicality. The dual nature of Earth in Virgo indicates that confusion is an in born phenomenon because of which the world remains on the move all the time. If there is no friction, life stops moving ahead.

Friction can be both good and bad. People under this sign are very practical, informative and full of knowledge. They do not leave any stone unturned in achieving their goals and they keep on increasing their knowledge. They like to analyze anything; they believe in going to the core and in the process, they sometimes try too hard. They also have the tendency to become extremists.

PLANET — MERCURY — D

Please see the article under Gemini sign.

Libra — The Charmer

SHAPE — THE BALANCE

Libra is the seventh sign of the zodiac. Libra is considered a perfect scale to weigh, measure and ultimately arrive at a perfect balance. Therefore, it is not surprising to see a Libran balancing life. Balance is a keyword in a Libran's life and he strives until he arrives at it. A Libran also keeps working hard to create a balance between personal and professional life. There would be times when he may stake all his energies to strike a perfect balance between worldly and spiritual life and this is seen in various spheres of a Libran's life.

The seventh sign or the seventh house is symbolic of the opposite sex. Therefore, there is a natural attraction of Librans towards the opposite sex. Librans are born charmers; they instinctively know how to make their partner feel desirable. They are well versed in the art of love-making, without reading Vatsayana's *Kamasutra* or the sex manuals of Masters and Johnson. Their wonder lies in making their partners feel comfortable and arouse them at the optimum level with their artistic approach.

One of the greatest gifts Librans are blessed with is to be able to notice the talent of others and promote them to the hilt. Librans can be great social organizers or event managers. They can be excellent showmen and know how to play their cards to

the best of their abilities. The creative ability of Librans surprises others from time to time.

A Libran can also be a great leader, capable of praiseworthy sacrifices. Contradictorily enough, a Libran will not bother promoting others or giving them importance till he gets due recognition. There is a subtle desire not only to act but also to mesmerize others with his acting skill. Since this sign represents balance, it has been noticed that the Libran can be a very balanced leader. Neither applause nor discouragement can carry him away. They can remain cool and calm even in the midst of crises.

Librans have two basic conflicts within their personality. They can become pleasure-seeking, leaving no stone unturned to pursue personal happiness, even at the cost of others. Once a Libran is on this kind of spree, then he does not know where to stop and it could be counter-productive to his entire personality, which is otherwise, in principle, based on balance. At times he can get influenced by pseudo-spiritualism, which can do more harm than good.

If ever a Libran finds himself in an unwanted relationship, then he will make sure that the burden of the break-up does not fall on his shoulders. In his heart of hearts, a Libran is scared of a split but, nevertheless, wants to play safe and will do everything to emerge unscathed from a relationship. Even this indicates the bottom line of the Libran personality — balance.

SYMBOL — G

Libra is the seventh sign of the zodiac. Its glyph is rather unique. There is an independent, horizontal line above which is a semi-circle with two short lines attached to both ends. These two halves form a loop, canopy or a nicely formed semi-circle bulging upward. It looks like a face beneath which are outstretched arms. The upper part of the glyph denotes the higher state of the mind, where the imagination process wants to touch the sky. The higher power of mind does not want to be

confined to any known boundaries, because limiting the thought process is death, equal to killing someone physically. It has to be spontaneous. The semi-circle is well connected with the two half halves at the both ends, which form two small horizontal lines. Beneath this a perfect horizontal line provides total support; and an unquestionable base. The semi-circle along with two halves represents the universal mind the horizontal line below stands in perfect support, enabling the mind to contemplate that which is almost impossible. However, to achieve a balance of the self is not an easy task at all. That is why a Libran constantly strives to achieve balance despite meeting failure often. Since the inherent drive is so intense, it keeps the force and energy intact until the target is achieved.

The glyph of this sign also resembles a hat. In order to keep the food grain free from pesticides and destruction people in the villages make a special clay cover so that the grain can be preserved for long. The geometrical sign of Libra shows duality at the psychological level where conflict between the personal and social levels is quite apparent. If we dig a little deeper, then the same conflict becomes more serious between the practical and spiritual aspects of life. The semi-arc which resembles a hat is a clear indication that mental faculties are used to the optimum. The human mind is the real source of all knowledge. It is believed that zodiac is full of information which penetrates the human mind right from birth. Therefore, at one point mind. The mind is set to take a quantum leap into the unknown horizon in a bid to get all the information available. The horizontal line beneath it is the root which represents the practical side of the world. If we look at the hat, this horizontal line can be interpreted the human body from the neck downwards, connected to a firm base. It is exactly like a clay cover that covers the grain used by villagers to protect grain and is in contact with the ground, but is slightly raised to ensure that the grain is kept intact, providing oxygen, light and fresh air. The glyph clearly indicates the duality — reaching for the sky

while keeping the feet firmly on the ground. It is an art which requires a lot of skill, patience, endurance and experience before one perfects it.

ELEMENT — BALANCE IN AIR

The seventh sign of the zodiac is Libra; its element is air. It is a cardinal or movable sign, its primary characteristic being balanced nature. Air is always moving; it represents thought, imagination and to some extent fantasy. When the thought process comes to this sign, it finds a balance because Libra is a balanced sign and the thought process is on the perfect plane not getting motivated, not getting inspired by its negative or positive overtones. Therefore, perfection is being created and maintained. The importance of the element air comes here, in Libra, which gives expansion and growth to his rational mind and provides him with a new, hitherto unknown world. The cardinal air of Libra also has a tremendous force in it and this kind of lauded thought process needs the support of air to reach out. Like Taurus the lord of Libra is Venus.

However in Libra the element is entirely different; it is air. When we come to Libra everything flourishes, production takes place and growth and development are a part and parcel of this sign. In astrology, Venus is considered the planet of love. It is also considered to be a planet of abundance. However, this abundance is achieved only through hard work, which is the significance of Taurus when tremendous effort is made. People who are born under Libra are organized, know their target, are decisive, very calculative, and intelligent. Once they make up their mind, it is difficult to shake them from their path. Nothing on the whole earth can stop them, but, sometimes they get overcharged by worldly pleasures; they make mistakes and start falling from grace.

PLANET — VENUS — F

Already described under Taurus, please see there.

Scorpio — The Mysterious

SHAPE — THE SCORPION

This is the eighth sign of the zodiac which signifies two things boldly — sex and death. Scorpios are extremely secretive in nature; they may even go to the extent of mysticism. Sex is an essential part of their being and many phases of life revolve around sex. Sex not only attracts indulgence but can also help people transcend it. It is strange and pathetic that millions of people get trapped only in lust, which is just one aspect of sex. The other important facet of sex is its sacredness. A general tendency to veil things from each other gives a mysterious aspect to the whole act. In sex, two people try to merge with each other but they also transcend it and reach another beautiful indefinable realm.

Scorpios are blessed since they can understand the deeper meaning of their psychic personality by knowing the act (of sex) fully. Awareness about the process of sex can enable man to transcend it completely. There are many tantric methods which help man to use this energy for transcendentalism. Enlightenment can also be achieved by understanding sexual energy.

The other important feature of the Scorpio sign is death. There are a thousand fears in this world, but each of them is inextricably linked to the fear of death. Death is an irreparable loss. Death also involves mystery about the soul — where it goes to and where it comes from? Is there life after death? The sign of Scorpio teaches us to understand the unknown and Scorpios can decipher the hidden meaning of life as well as death.

Life flows out of the claws of death. In a strange way, life and death are synonyms. Scorpios understand this misery and pain of life. Invariably, they have the minds of psychologists, who can even understand the pain and agony of others and help them come out of it. They can work to destroy other people's emotional blocks and self-destructive tendencies by providing them the right outlets. As a matter of fact, the Scorpio personality can lead up to two types, or two extremes.

He can either be a healer who helps another person in times of misery; or, he could become a psychopath capable of ruining the peace of another. The positive side is that a Scorpio is the illuminating light which can take away the darkness of others. On the other hand, the same person can be a self-destructive force as well.

Hatred and love are two passionate extremes which Scorpios are sensitive to. No other sign is parallel to this sign. In the process of hatred, a Scorpio can get trapped into enmity and a confrontationist approach. They are extremists — whether they are in love or hate.

SYMBOL — H

The glyph of Scorpio is represented by three vertical lines, which can be depicted as the coil of a serpent. This glyph ends with an arrow. The poisonous fangs are ready to inflict poison, once provoked. This is also a symbol for accumulated tension in the sexual organs of a male in a state of excitement. It contains a new life force which has latent energy for procreation.

Scorpio is the eighth sign of the zodiac and rules over the most important aspects of human life ie, sex and death. As a matter of fact, sex and death are deeply interconnected with each other. Right since the inception of mankind these two aspects of life are highly misunderstood and are as mysterious in nature. Sex is directly related to the beginning of life but death also has a subtle beginning in it, but not without demolishing the present form. The glyph of Scorpio represents two poisonous reptiles — one is a snake and the other a scorpion.

The basic nature of a scorpion is to hide itself in a hole or cavity and once it comes out of its hiding place it behaves impulsively and is ready to inflict anyone who tries to come close to it. The basic nature of sex is just like a scorpion but man has changed his behaviour because of culture, knowledge and other considerations. The glyph of this sign, which ends with an arrow, clearly indicates the hidden nature of a scorpion.

The glyph and depiction of the Scorpio sign itself is full of secrecy and a lot of mysticism is involved in it. This sign is also known as a sign of the occult and is directly linked with death. The few who have understood the subtleties of death become fearless forever. Death and fear are interrelated. The fear of death is so intense that many people go into a coma or become unconscious when death stares them in the face. It has also been observed that many of those who have died of non-poisonous snake bites have died merely because of fear. Spirituality has taught us that if one can embrace death, then one becomes free of death forever. Religion is of the opinion that death is just like changing the old clothes and getting into new ones. In the same way we get rid of an old, non-supportive body and enter a new one. The occult is directly related to this glyph. There are three vertical lines in the glyph which end with an arrow.

There are three concepts which make life complete and this has been known to different religions since ancient times. Hinduism is based on three symbolic figureheads — Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh. Christianity also believes in the Holy Trinity. The further division of the same principle also has three natures ie, *satvik, rajsik* and *tamsik*. The same phenomenon is present in our body as energy form of *ida, pingala, sushumna nadis*. If we go deep inside ourselves, then we need to locate the *sushumna nadi,* which is hidden in between *ida* and *pingala*. This concept also holds true for the three rivers: Ganges, Yamuna and Saraswati. It is worth noting that Saraswati is not a visible river as is Ganges or Yamuna, but once the duality of self is known, the life force starts flowing through *sushumna. Sushumna* is a state of trance which can be achieved once a person overcomes his duality of thought and action.

ELEMENT — STILL WATERS RUN DEEP

Scorpio is a watery, fixed sign. Water has a lot to do with our emotions, feelings, pleasure and pain. In the Scorpio sign we can

imagine a huge pond full of water, which in the surface looks very quiet, but deep down contains all the mysteries of the world. Water and growth are interwoven. Growth of human beings, plants and animals is not possible without water. A child also develops in the womb which comprises amniotic fluid. There is a mystery in the creation of child. It needs darkness, warmth, and water. The element water also deals with our deep-rooted emotions and in this sign, we start understanding the joys and sorrows of relationships. Another beautiful characteristic of water is that it makes us aware of our hidden potential. In astrology, Scorpio is the eighth sign, which also rules over the genitals. Anatomically, the genitals are in the middle of the human body, hidden to a certain extent by Nature. Creation maintains its secrecy that is the way a child grows in the womb and remains a secret till it starts taking shape. In the same way, a seed grows in darkness and an element of secrecy is maintained.

In Scorpio remains quiet on the surface but moves intensely in the layers deep down. Mars rules it and Mars is a fiery, hot planet. In Scorpio we come across a different kind of heat. In Aries it is apparent heat but in Scorpio it is latent heat. This fire is mysterious. Therefore, if you are born under this sign you are honest, straightforward, kind, full of humanity, gentle like water, but once provoked there is no limit that you will not cross because of the latent heat.

PLANET — MARS — C

Already described under Aries, please see there.

Sagittarius — The Focused

SHAPE — THE ARCHER

Sagittarius is the ninth sign of the zodiac. The constellations of this sign give a picture of an archer who is aiming without a clear goal. This symbol clearly indicates a fire, passion or craving to reach out, without any physical move. The archer is

half-man and half-horse and its legs are hidden. It indicates that Sagittarians try out many things or explore various areas.

If Sagittarians remain involved with the larger issues of life, then they can do wonders. They have a desire to do something meaningful for society. They get turned off by seeing the pain and mystery of the world. A true Sagittarian will try his level best to change the course of events within his range. On the other hand, if he gets confined to petty issues, then he tends to develop selfish or irresponsible behaviour. Sometimes he commits many social blunders due to lack of empathy.

A Sagittarian is bold, courageous and outspoken; he is restless till he achieves his goals. He is charged with a tremendous energy, which keeps him on his feet all the time. Normally, he does not get tired easily. At times his habit of being outspoken can land him in embarrassing situations. Sometimes in his quest of self-fulfillment, he tends to cross all limits. There are constant efforts of self-projection, which invariably annoy people around him. A Sagittarian can have a narrow-minded mentality at times. Another difficulty with the archer is that he always wants something more and is never satisfied. Since a Sagittarian pursues power recklessly, there is the danger of becoming a dictator. If he is on a philosophical trip, then he will never be at rest and if he is fired with nationalism, then he would not hesitate becoming a martyr.

There is a powerful desire in an archer to be perfect. He will spend a lot of energy to explore new dimensions to his personality. Primarily his aim is to master the art which beckons him. Since an archer is hard working and lives with the never-say-die spirit, chances are he will obtain his goal ultimately.

Sagittarius is invariably scared of taking personal responsibility; however, he will prefer many uncommitted relationships. He is quite aware of his freedom and does not want to surrender to one person. Due to various reasons, the sex life of a Sagittarian is mechanical rather than emotional. A Sagittarian would rather be linked to the larger perspective than

to be trapped in small issues. He would like to be a philosopher, writer, painter or a scientist. Given the platform of a social structure, a Sagittarian's positive personality can manifest fully.

SYMBOL — I

The Sagittarius geometrical symbol is the simplest one. The glyph of this sign, consisting of an arrow with a cross attached to its lower part, makes it essentially special in the parlance of twelve signs.

The arrow of Sagittarius indicates a basic conflict between the mental and physical powers and the dilemma of wanting to aim perfectly. The glyph of Sagittarius denotes that there is immense inheritance force which can either be used for construction or destruction, depending upon the situation.

Sagittarians are often at loss, because the inner battle of positive and negative forces is so intense that it seldom leaves them with energy to target the bull's eye. Sagittarius also indicates the state of human development in which man has learnt to utilize his inner strength to the optimum. Sagittarius is ever-ready to impregnate others (society) with his thought and imagination because he is a habitual shooter.

There is an inner desire of a strong self-statement which is so intense that the mind and body work in perfect coordination to explore the unknown. The direction of the arrow is towards a higher destination. Man is willing to use his latent energy to achieve the greater aim. At this stage of evolution, man is not willing to leave any stone unturned to achieve the target. The cross attached to the arrow is an indication that if he puts all his energy on the bow and directs the arrow to the target with tremendous force, there is every possibility that the cross will enter the target and make the job complete. This cross also provides the arrow with extra force, enabling it to penetrate into the deeper layers of the target. However, at times there seems to be great urgency to prove a point without achieving any perfection. If somehow or the other, inner harmony can be

achieved, then it is not difficult to achieve the target without encountering any problem.

The emblem of this sign is quite interesting and provides new meaning to the entire glyph of the arrow. The lower portion of the archer is not visible from trunk downwards; it has been covered by a half-horse whose legs are visible. In other words, this sign beautifully depicts half-animal, half-man. The archer is made of two energies — one of an animal and other of a human being. The legs of the horse are firmly grounded and the archer is using his total force to achieve the target. The raw energy of the animal suggests that man has travelled down the ages and has had various experiences while achieving difficult targets in his life. There is a long association between the horse and man and without the help of horse, man could have never progressed or emerged as a conqueror. In this emblem, we also notice that the hind part of the animal provides a solid base on the ground. The front part, which depicts a man with an arrow, is clearly indicative that man is capable as well as free to decide and achieve the target. To be a perfect archer, one needs a lot of energy, a composed mind, and thoughtful and steady action. On the surface, it looks that archer works for himself but when we observe minutely, we notice that he has an inner desire to serve mankind. Perhaps this is the reason that Sagittarius stands for knowledge and wisdom; which ultimately man wants to share with others. To achieve great heights in life, one needs to sacrifice personal needs and perform deeds for others.

ELEMENT — LEARNED FIRE

Sagittarius is the ninth sign of the zodiac. It is a dual nature sign and fire is the element. The Lord of this sign is Jupiter. In the scheme of element, we come across fire for the third time. First, it was the fire of Aries and then it was fire of Leo. The third sign where the element fire is again seen is Sagittarius. In Aries, when we talk of fire, we find the fire to be a primitive one; a revolutionary fire but one of passion. When it grows, it is akin

to a fire of jungle. In Leo, it is a meaningful fire, an eternal fire. It is a kind of fire that can transform totally, inside and outside. Perhaps that is why Leo represents a sign of the soul.

Sagittarius is also a fiery sign and its nature is dual as we understand in astrological terminology. Primarily, fire means putting all energies in one direction, and aiming correctly with total determination. At times, the duality of the sign creates confusion in the mind, because duality of purpose can hamper getting the right kind of results one expects from the fire element. The moment we come across fire which is dual, then it creates a suspicion in the mind as to what kind of fire it could be. Before we talk more about it, we need to understand what kind of a fire it could be; why this fire has duality.

The lord of this sign is Jupiter. Jupiter is a teacher, a master, a guru who knows everything. Whatsoever we learn, we learn from the guru. So, just imagine a situation where a guru is teaching and disciple is not paying enough attention. As a consequence, the guru gets angry with his disciple and punishes him. But in his heart of heart, the guru does not want to give to his disciple any punishment. Both are unhappy, but the guru knows that this punishment is for betterment. Fire has an in-built quality to mould and to transform. Positive anger can also yield the same result. This is the basic change we see in this particular sign.

The symbol of Sagittarius is of a man who has grounded himself perfectly and is aiming with a bow and arrow, keeping the target in mind. An arrow also indicates the future, because the arrow is leaving the bow and the archer somewhere behind, when finding an aim. If the real meaning of self is to be found, then one has to go beyond himself and be totally detached. In this sign, we notice that the feet of the archer are hidden and deeply-rooted in the ground. The fire element in Sagittarius is very sacred, very well-controlled, willing to transform a person at his own will. In Aries we saw a primitive fire, in Leo we saw a self-controlled fire and in Sagittarius, we see a fire which can

be kindled and used according to the situation. The fire in Sagittarius is very meaningful; the duality of the fire makes this sign mysterious. Initially it may look suspicious, but when we investigate further, we find this fire to be a very sacred fire which wants to transform but takes its own time to do so.

PLANET — JUPITER — E

The glyph of Jupiter is extremely important in the parlance of astrological symbolism. The pictogram of Jupiter can be divided into three parts. The upper part which is like a crescent is connected horizontally to the left side. In the second part, just below the arc, there is a cup-like shape and the third part is of a prominent cross which we have noticed earlier in Mercury's glyph too.

In astrology, Jupiter stands for knowledge, wisdom, justice, compassion, nobility, kindness, growth and development. The glyph of Jupiter depicts all the wonderful qualities of its magnanimous self in such a beautiful way that it does not need any lengthy description. If we divide the geometrical symbol of Jupiter into three different parts, each part speaks volumes about the greatness of guru. The first part of this pictogram is an arc, which resembles with the glyph of the Moon. While understanding the glyph of Moon, we have noticed that it was independent and free from all liabilities. Whenever the mind enjoys total freedom, there is a possibility of revolution as well as destruction. On most occasions, the mind will settle down for the latter because it is easier. In the glyph of Jupiter, we notice the crescent is beautifully connected with the cup. The cup is extremely significant for various reasons and represents life, because it can hold nectar. The very nature of cup is to provide life and energy to others and serve humanity. The arc which represents the glyph of the Moon is firmly connected with the cup, indicating that the mind is busy with the concerns of others. In the initial stage, Jupiter needs to gain knowledge, wisdom and use his mind completely. It is very important that

all thought and imagination should be with a purpose, and have a long-lasting impact.

Interpret the third part of this glyph gives a different meaning altogether to this pictogram. We have already explained earlier the importance of the cross and its universal appeal. The significance of cross gains importance with every new situation and circumstance. Basically, a cross is made of two important factors. To begin with, a cross stands for experiencing whatsoever is good or bad in this world. To acquire certain knowledge and experience of life at different levels, one needs to learn a lot. There cannot be any hesitation if the path is full of thorns or if one faces obstacles at each step. Nor can one stop until the goal is achieved. The cross suggests that once something significant is achieved, whether it is knowledge or material gains, then it has to be distributed among fellow-beings without any discrimination. Material gains are insignificance if one is not spiritually enriched. The real as well as hidden meaning of the cross is to achieve enlightenment, be in this birth or in future reincarnations.

Three things stand out in the glyph of Jupiter. To acquire worldly knowledge and spiritual understanding, one needs the intuitive understanding of the Moon. If the Moon (mind) has a purpose, it can fill all the empty cups and reach a higher state of consciousness. The cross connected with the cup indicates that whenever your cup starts overflowing, you become the endowed one and the only alternative is to distribute the nectar freely.

Capricorn — The Single-Minded

SHAPE — THE GOAT

Capricorn is the tenth sign of the zodiac. The Capricornian is a serious, business-minded person, overtly jolly and does not get easily carried away. Some of them may be witty but at the core of their being, they remain methodical. They believe that if one has to grow in stature, total devotion is required. Most of them

are firm believers in the saying that 'Rome was not built in a day'. However, there are exceptions everywhere and a rare Capricornian may be a day-dreamer, who hasn't learnt a lesson despite the shattering of many dreams.

Their true feelings are buried inside them and they seldom express them. Even in the worst eventualities, they are capable of maintaining their cool, without demonstrating their inner feelings. In relationships too, they suffer due to lack of verbal or physical expression. Invariably, they are misunderstood and face the wrath of people close to them. Capricornians worry too much, with the result that a vacuum is created inside them, which later becomes difficult to shed. A certain amount of pessimism is set deep inside them, which does not allow them to open up. However, whenever this vacuum becomes too heavy, then the Capricornian may look for the right kind of friend to share his woes with.

Capricornians work with a missionary zeal towards power and authority. Their modus operandi is secretive and they keep all cards close to his heart. They are more at ease when they do not have to lead from the front. They would rather take charge of the situation from behind. They are not very fond of working hard on intimate relationships. They can easily dissociate themselves from anyone who tries to come too close.

Capricornians have a subtle urge to control the lives of others. This trait can't be easily perceived as their outer image is something else. They are also good organizers or event managers. They are hard working and dedicated. Once they take up a task, they will do their best to complete it. People easily depend upon them. However, on the surface they do it with a pure intention, but the hidden desire remains to gain control over others.

Capricornians are easily impressed by material possession or power. With the have-nots, they will behave snobbishly and in a condescending manner. With those who are affluent, they will

be subservient. This double-facedness is sometimes seen as a Capricornian trait. They are good manipulators; they can not only influence others but take advantage of them too.

SYMBOL — J

From the top the geometrical emblem of Capricorn resembles the horns and head of an animal. This continues into a horizontal extended loop, followed by an arc which goes downward. The curve also looks like a scaly fish-tail.

Before we understand the phenomenon of a goat vis-à-vis the sign of Capricorn, we shall attempt to analyze the hidden meaning of this sign. The front shape of this sign, which represents horn and head of an animal, clearly indicates that to achieve something significant, one has to bring to the surface to rise. At the same time, it is not easy to focus on the aim without getting totally absorbed. The head and horns also indicate an inner urge to bring ones ego to the highest level and prove a point. To fight with all his might, man has come to the surface of his being. Capricorn is the tenth house of the zodiac which rules over karma (action) of man. This house has a lot to do with ones apparent ego, which is manifested over the period of sojourn of this planet.

This happens when an individual wants to prove something to himself as well as to the world by achieving extraordinary objectives. One has to go through the pangs of pain and frustration before realizing ones ambition. The adjoining loop, with the horns which turn downward towards the right, denotes that man's ego goes through tremendous karmic test and turmoil before achieving the target. This downward arc also indicates there are many trials and tribulations before one achieve perfection. A constant struggle has to be waged to remain at the helm of affairs. The loop also suggests it is just not possible to remain on top forever and that fall is eminent. The apparent ego of man can help him to remain at the top till he

has the capacity to prove himself constantly. A slight deviation or lack of concentration and we see him sliding down, because the downward loop is extremely powerful with devastating gravitational pull.

Capricorn is represented by mountain goat. However, with slight variation it is also understood as a sea-goat. The basic characteristic of a mountain goat is its ability to balance itself while walking on perilous rocks and cliffs. There is a constant struggle because his legs are extremely thin, but its hoofs are firmly placed on the uneven rocks, keeping a perfect balance. It has learned this art after a great struggle of thousands of years and has evolved a method of scaling up and down, the height after height, exploring the ever-rising mountains in the firm belief and undying but firm action. The search of material substance becomes so important and dear that he does not leave anything to chance. The mountain goat continues ascending or descending towards its target without getting tired at all. Each footstep is based on perfect calculation; impulsiveness has to be discarded, otherwise the target can become illusive and the goat could tumble down. Although the goat is anxious, it takes his own time and is never in a hurry. One needs to overcome outward hunger, if need be, while inwardly planning next move in the assault on the mountains.

If we look at the glyph of Capricorn and compare it with a mountain goat and do a comprehensive study, we realize that a sense of personal prowess is quite apparent in this sign and a factor of uncertainty is also an entwined phenomenon. The very awareness of these two different qualities creates a path of self-chosen identity. Therefore, it becomes very important to safeguard ones position and look for security. Perhaps, this is the reason that material security is so highly valued by them and a disassociation of thought gives rise to vulnerability. Acquisition of power or a new chosen identity takes a centre place in their scheme of things and they stop identifying with less than that. Once identification with status and respect is

established, it becomes almost impossible to conceive oneself otherwise. Sometimes, they do not see beyond themselves — a negative trait and, if not checked in time, leads to disorientation of their personality.

ELEMENT — GROUNDED EARTHINESS

The next sign of this group is Capricorn, which is a cardinal sign, a moveable sign. The element is earth. We have come across the element earth twice before — once in Taurus and then in Virgo. The earth is dual; everything happening in this world has duality, as day and night, good and bad, man and woman. The duality is seen in the earth element in Virgo. Now we come to Capricorn. Here the element again is earth, which is on the move. When this happens, things start changing rapidly, nothing remains constant. Everything is on the move and everything is changeable. The moment things become unchangeable or static, they start decaying. If there is no movement, then life comes to an end. In this group of elements, we saw the objective side of man was more in evidence; he appears more spiritual and the universal meaning of his psychic process is more important. Capricorn being an earthly element is also cardinal, making man global. In Capricorn, the growth pattern is already established. He becomes more practical, business-like, systematic and organized in his general approach. Suddenly he looks at the vastness in him, which directly corresponds to the vastness of the sign. He starts believing in himself and is well equipped with the ground realities of life. The Lord of this sign is Saturn. Saturn owns two signs — one is Capricorn and the other is Aquarius. Saturn looks after the practical side of our being and Capricorn helps Saturn to establish his grip on this world because of its element, the earth. Earth is a planet and when earth is the element as well, we must recognize and accept that everything is happening on earth. We build our houses on the earth, we get food from the earth and we are connected to the earth. Considering the utility of the

earth, it is of paramount importance. So Capricorn, being the tenth sign of the zodiac, can help mankind to make the best use of possibilities, the environment and the situations.

PLANET — SATURN — G

The glyph of Saturn is exactly the same as that of Jupiter, but it is just the opposite of Jupiter. It can also be divided into three parts. Instead of dividing these three parts from the top, let's start from the bottom of the glyph. Towards the last portion of the bottom, we see a glyph hanging like the Moon. The second part is of a cup, which has been emptied because it is hanging in the opposite direction. The third division of the glyph can be made of a cross which is attached to the top of the symbol.

In astrology, Saturn is understood as a planet of renunciation. Out of the many characteristics of Saturn, some are pessimism, pettiness, scepticism, fatalism, suspicion, heartlessness, obstinacy, inaccessibility and a self-conscious attitude. Some other properties of Saturn are loyalty, introspection, patience and a deeper understanding of pain, misery and anguish that one faces in life, from time to time. There are a few finer qualities as well, which are attributed to this great planet and these are self-control, perseverance, earnestness, proficiency, diligence, accuracy, sense of duty and sacrifice.

The glyph of Saturn can be divided into three parts. If we observe the glyph from the bottom, then we clearly see that the glyph of the Moon which is attached to the cup. While observing Jupiter's glyph, we see the same phenomenon but the glyph of the Moon was on the top as far as Jupiter was concerned. On the other hand, in the glyph of Saturn, the attachment of the arc with the emptied cup, makes the entire glyph important. In the absence of any fulfillment of desire, the mind gets distressed and anguished, leading to frustration. Saturn, being the planet of renunciation, understands that unless and until the mind has emptied itself from all material expectations, it can never taste

the fruit of spiritualism. It is very important that the mind should go through all sorts of pain and unhappiness to see the worthlessness of all desire. Only then it can start a sojourn on the higher plane. The hanging glyph of the Moon with the entire glyph of Saturn underlines the importance of harbouring no desires and expectations on the path to self-realization.

The second division of the glyph is of a cup which is upside down. The importance of the cup lies only when it is placed correctly. The moment the cup is emptied, it loses all its value as far as worldly affairs are concerned. Primarily, the cup denotes life, knowledge and wisdom. However, the empty cup is an indication of deeper understanding of self-denial where nothingness takes centre stage. The empty cup also adds new spiritual dimensions to this glyph. If man wants to get rid of all worldly miseries and pain which keep following him like a shadow throughout life, then he needs to empty the cup of all worldly desires and expectations.

The third part of this glyph is a cross, which is attached on top of the symbol. Whenever a cross is attached with any symbol downward it becomes very subjective in the beginning, but later on objectivity takes over. The attachment of the cross to any symbol towards the sky is a clear indication that the worldly temptations have come to cease and nothing on this earth moves the man at a personal level. The energy has synchronized and is now ready to become impersonal. The moment one achieves this deeper level of understanding, all miseries, frustration and anguish drop immediately. The entire glyph of Saturn suggests that if one is willing to understand the intricacies of desires and pains of the mind, one starts moving towards the higher goals of his being. Once the tragic phenomenon of temptation is understood, then at the second stage one needs to empty the cup and enrich his soul. The moment you become empty, then the magic of the cross begins, with its blessings getting showered and making you fresh forever.

Aquarius — The Researcher

SHAPE — THE COSMIC MAN

Aquarius is the eleventh sign of the zodiac. Constellations of this sign depict the picture of a man carrying an urn on his shoulder, with the water overflowing. It is a sign of abundance or fulfillment and the fact that there is no scarcity of knowledge or compassion. Water is the nectar of life. Aquarians are full of humanity and have a deep concern about society. Normally they are more concerned about the less privileged and try their best to help in any manner, whatever is possible.

Aquarius is also a sign of communication. There is a great urge in Aquarians to communicate their ideas to others. Normally an Aquarian would try to be systematic and adopt a pragmatic approach while communicating his thoughts. Once his ideas have been given shape, he would go all out to see that they are implemented. Aquarians love to be vocal, always striving for something new. At times they tend to get carried away with their crusade against something which they do not approve of and can be quite ruthless. There is always the danger of going overboard and side-tracking the real issue.

Aquarians are multi-faceted personalities and would try to do many things which may not have the sanction of tradition or society. A true Aquarian does not believe in nationalist boundaries. For them, the human being is a liberated soul and should be able to experience life the way he desires; there should not be any sort of pressure, whether legal or social. It is because of these idealistic views, that they find themselves maladjusted to society.

A true Aquarian is of the opinion that certain restrictions are fine as long as they are not brutally imposed. A man should be made aware of positive and negative points and no judgment should be forced on him. They also believe that real knowledge comes from within and that time does not spare any one. When time punishes someone, only then real understanding sinks in.

Aquarius is a sign of growth and development. It is believed

that we are in now in the Aquarian Age, an age of scientific invention. The mantra of Aquarian Age is that when man seeks the outside world, he gets scientific answers; but when he looks within for answers, he gets spiritual answers. Therefore, the Age of Aquarius is a bridge between science and religion. There was a time when spiritualism touched the zenith and now is, perhaps, the time when science will be on the pinnacle of glory. A true Aquarian always strives for a scientific temper with a spiritualistic understanding.

SYMBOL — K

The geometrical symbol of Aquarius is very simple. It represents two independent waves and pictorially, the symbol is represented by a pitcher from which the water is overflowing. The Sanskrit word of this sign is *kumbha,* which literally means a 'pitcher'.

Astrology is based on mathematics as far as the calculation part is concerned and superfluously makes ones job easy to interpret the trait and personality of an individual to a considerable extent. Statistics help to forecast the major events of his life. However, if one wants to know the deeper intricacies of an individual's pattern of life, then only the esoteric ways are left by which one can understand the hidden essence of an individual's being. Astrology believes that this life is full of mystery and as one tries to go deeper in it, the mystery gets further intensified. Therefore, only one option is left — demystify and decode life through the help of different signs and symbols.

The glyph of Aquarius does not denote a still pond. The waves ripple over the water. Actually it is the winds which result in waves and is a clear suggestion of movement. Modern science believes that the electrical particles convert themselves into waves and most scientific phenomena are nothing but the magic of waves, which control the Universe. Scientists also say that the human brain receives and send messages via electrical

charges. All the communications functioning through air waves and electrical impulses are deeply associated with the Aquarius sign, be it a satellite communication, radio, telegraph, telephone, television, internet, etc. There is an inherent desire in man to have an objective view of the world. The beauty of this sign is that it enables man to be one with the world. The best way is to associate with one another and to become humane, sensitive, loveable and compassionate with each other's needs and requirement. Perhaps, this is the reason the sign of Aquarius is known for humanity, where one cannot discriminate blindly.

The pictorial symbol of this sign is that of a pitcher which is overflowing with water. Water is a basic need; that is why it is considered nectar throughout the world. It is impossible to imagine life without water. The overflowing of water from the pitcher is suggestive of a deep-rooted desire to share joy and happiness with others. It is very interesting to note that whenever anybody is brimming with joy and happiness, it is just not possible to be quiet and not share the joy with others. It is possible and rather easy when one is depressed or sad, as one can hide himself from the world by becoming recluse. Symbolically, the pitcher is directly connected with knowledge, creation and intuitive wisdom. There is an inherent and universal desire that whenever one unravels any mystery of this world, he wants to share it with the rest of the world. The sojourn of knowledge is based on this principle and one is fulfilled with compassion towards others. In most cases it so happens that one stops seeing others as different to oneself. Perhaps this is the reason that those who have attained knowledge in the past or have done so in the present or will acquire in future will keep on sharing and making this world a happier place. That is why the sign of Aquarius stands for humanity.

ELEMENT — AIR BEYOND SELF

The next sign of the Zodiac is Aquarius. Here the element is air; it is fixed and the Lord of this sign is Saturn. Analyzing the

zodiac, we have come across the element air twice — first in Gemini. In Gemini, the air has duality, where we see a thought is being created in space and remains dual. Then we came across the air element again in Libra. Libra is a balanced sign, a moveable sign. So, thought or imagination is very balanced here. Then we came to Aquarius. In this present group of elements, man has started delving deeper into the hidden meaning of his psychological being. Aquarius being a global sign, takes care of the humane element of a human being, helping him to cross all the boundaries of self. A feeling of selflessness starts taking place and nothing remains personal. As a matter of fact, all personal agendas lose their meaning when the real meaning of life starts unfolding. The air element of Aquarius, which has no boundaries, suddenly makes his approach universal and the element of humanity opens up new horizons within. A beautiful state of selflessness starts setting in, deep in his being.

The Aquarius sign is full of abundance and fulfillment. Development and growth have taken place. This is the also the Age of Aquarius. This Aquarian Age is of science on one hand and spirituality, on the other. So we find that both science and spirituality get wedded to each other. When we analyze the element air in Aquarius, it is fixed. Aquarius is a sign which rules over huge space. It looks fixed from the outer boundaries but within itself, it is on the move and everything is well connected.

In Aquarius, the planet Saturn is very pleased, happy and in a good mood because Saturn is a planet for mankind, for the masses, where everything should be in abundance. It is a slow-moving planet; it is rather stingy, giving very little in the beginning but once it starts showering, then there is no limit. In that sense, the element air is very useful, very meaningful when we talk of Aquarius. People born in the Aquarius sign have a fertile mind, openness and globalization is their mantra. They live up to the optimum, but sometimes they get jittery; sometimes they get worried about others and even themselves,

and, when it comes to themselves, they do not know how to cope. However, on the whole, this is a beautiful sign and the element air is on its zenith.

PLANET - SATURN — G

Already described under Capricorn, please see there.

Pisces — The Contended

SHAPE — THE FISHES

Pisces is the last sign of the zodiac. The constellations put together resemble a fish. Water is the habitat of fish, and water itself denotes life. All sorts of emotions, feelings or instincts are primarily ruled by the water element. Water is the universal solvent, capable of dissolving most things. The sign has a deep understanding of human behaviour. Fish is considered gentle, considerate, kind and full of empathy towards others. Therefore, it is not surprising to find Pisceans compassionate and willing to go all out for those who are close to them.

Their ideology for society, nation, religion or sect is very clear as they believe there should be unity and oneness not only at a material level, but at spiritual level too. They prefer to work at places where larger issues of society are being tackled. Invariably, their concern and understanding about others is deep on the emotional level. They are well-groomed and resourceful. They are also willing to explore the new areas of human psychology, for better understanding of the masses. Pisceans are excellent observers and can be very good administrators. Since they possess the knack to communicate with others on an emotional level, it helps them to extract the best from their colleagues and subordinates. They are rather authoritarian, but only on a subtle level. Sometimes it is difficult to understand their real modus operandi.

Pisceans need to spend time with themselves. At times they tend to absorb the thoughts and feelings of others, which can then start telling upon them. Therefore, it is always better if they

seek a break or solitude at periodical intervals. It would do them a world of good as they retreat and recharge themselves.

Pisceans are psychic and extremely kind towards their friends, near and dear ones, so much so that sometimes they lose their discriminating faculty. It has been noticed that many times, undeserving people get close to them and take advantage of their generosity. Endowed with powerful imagination, they are actually powerful people as most of the time they operate from their subconscious mind. The psychic side of their personality enables them to come out with innovative ideas, which can be useful for the community. There is a very fine thread-like difference between intuition and illusion. Normally Pisceans are good with intuitive wisdom. But at times, they get carried away, thus confusing their illusion with intuition and commit blunders. They need to master the art of discrimination.

SYMBOL — L

The glyph of Pisces is composed of two half-circles united by a straight line. These two arcs represent the two different polarities, which are symbolically connected with a straight line.

One arc of this glyph represents the limited consciousness of man; the other arc denotes the unlimited consciousness of the Universe, which can also be called 'cosmic consciousness'. The different polarities suggest the material side of the human being and the spiritual side of the cosmos. There is a distinct gap between these two arcs, indicating that man is born with tremendous possibilities, provided he understands the finite consciousness of his being.

The line which cuts the two different poles denotes that without the deeper understanding of oneself and the cosmic consciousness, one cannot complete his sojourn successfully. If we pay a little more attention to these two different arcs, we notice that these two arcs face different directions. Perhaps, this is the reason that man lives on diverging currents and unending battles go on inside him. If one is eager to attain cosmic

consciousness, one needs to sacrifice ones personal wishes. The stream of these two different arcs is strong and completely absorbing, but it rarely happens that one can build a bridge and dissolve the polarities once and for all. This symbol suggests that materialism and spiritualism can be achieved simultaneously if one does not get entangled, but remains a pure witness to the consequences. This is possible because the horizontal line is connected from the middle of the two arcs suggesting, perhaps, that a middle path can act as a bridge between the finite and infinite. The other emblem of this sign is of two fishes, entangled with each other by their tails. They enjoy freedom in the vastness of the ocean.

Water is necessary to life and it is assumed that the beginning and the end of life is directly and deeply associated with water. Perhaps this is the reason that in all the religions and philosophies of this world, water symbolizes mysticism in the sojourn of mankind. Fish is considered auspicious; it is a symbol of fertility; water is where the seed gets an opportunity to flourish and continue the journey into the future. The beauty of this sign lies in the oceanic water and the fishes, which represent creation, prosperity, happiness and auspiciousness, where the divine will enjoys effortless creation. The compulsion and the culmination of past karmas are of no consequence. It is believed in most of the religions of the world that creation started taking place when the Creator was in absolute bliss. The oceanic water of Pisces and two fishes which are clinging to each other by their tails suggests that duality has ceased and man's ego has surrendered to the Almighty and merged in infinite depth (water).

ELEMENT - WATER - DUALITY OF WATER

The last sign of the zodiac is Pisces and the element here is water. This is a dual sign. This is the third time we come across water as the element. First it was present in Cancer. In Cancer, water means emotion. The second time we came across the

water element in Scorpio. In Scorpio we imagined a huge pond and in Pisces it is water of the ocean, but with duality.

The Lord of this sign is Jupiter. When the water is in dual form, what does it mean? How and why could water be dual? What is the psychic phenomenon implied here? Is there water or it isn't? Water is a nectar as we know and when the water is dual, it refers to the emotions that started in Cancer with tremendous force, because the sign is a moveable one; that tremendous force goes deep down in the system in Scorpio, but in Pisces it becomes dual, because all the emotions we have are of dual nature. So the nature of emotions which get transformed in due course of time is very much related with Pisces. Pisces, being the last sign of the zodiac, also teaches us that nothing remains constant and we must not remain in one kind of situation or emotion because emotions are bound to change from time to time.

The ocean of Pisces enables all humanity to submerge in water everything that is ruled by the heart. The heart is the ultimate destination of all relationships, achievement, research of evolvement. However, with emotion, the difficulty is that it is governed by the Moon, which is constantly changing; that is what we understood of Cancer. The Moon is the Lord of Cancer. In the second water sign, Scorpio, the emotion goes deep down. Bad feelings, good feelings, these are very intense in Scorpio whose ruler is Mars which gives very deep-rooted feelings, whether of hurt or of triumph. The Mars of Scorpio makes a person an extremist. But in Pisces, the water is dual and the Lord of this sign is Jupiter. Jupiter is a planet of wisdom. Here the element water teaches that whatever the feelings may be, they need to be synchronized. In Scorpio, the emotions can get dangerous and very complicated too, but when we come to Pisces, judgment is clear. There is honesty in situations and one understands the meaning of 'forgiving and forgetting'.

PLANET - JUPITER - E

Already described in Sagittarius, please see there.

CHAPTER FOUR

Influence of Moon on Human Mind

The Moon: A Familiar Planetary Body

The Moon, by virtue of its peculiar sizes and shapes, its proximity and its composition, enjoys a very special relationship with the Earth. Moon is Earth's only known natural satellite; it is the fifth largest amongst satellites and has the largest mass in relative proportion to the Earth. No wonder the mighty oceans on Earth's surface develop high tides; maximizing during a Full Moon.

There are several theories about the birth of the Moon. One belief is that the Moon was born when Earth and Mars collided and that the Earth got its 23.5 degree axial tilt at this juncture; and this also brought about climatic changes on Earth which has made conditions more conducive for life on earth. The emergence of intelligent life on earth is thus attributed to this rare occurrence.

The changing shape of the Moon makes it a very interesting planetary body for all human beings, especially children. Moon, being our closest planet, has tremendous effect on our life. Not only does it provide us with light in the darkness of night, but it also evokes varying thoughts in our minds. In astronomy, the occurrence of various events relating to the Moon requires mathematical calculations and great precision. 'Lunar

Conjunction' is the term used to describe the event when the Earth, Moon and Sun, in that order, are approximately in a straight line. Solar and the lunar eclipses are not only visually appealing and beautiful sights, they also entail detailed studies of the changes in various fields that affect all living beings on Earth.

The Moon & Human Life

Over centuries, people have associated the Moon and its changing shapes to various aspects and cycles of human life. The predictable cycles of the Moon and the Sun affect the tides of the oceans and, consequently, affect the activities of all living beings. In South-east Asian countries, where jungles and forests are in abundance, trees are generally cut during the fortnight of the waning Moon. Through bitter experience, people have learnt the consequences of doing otherwise — they have witnessed the growth of insects if trees are cut at any other time. There is a general belief that more babies are conceived at the time of the waxing Moon, and more male babies too. This clearly indicates people's acceptance of the Moon in their lives, with great respect, love and affection.

The romantic qualities associated with the Moon make it an ideal object for lovers or couples. In fact, the Moon, perhaps, is the most popular element for all romantic stories. It is the biggest backdrop in romantic literature and poetry. Often, the concept of beauty is described in relation to the Moon, while moonlight is used to describe purity and clarity. Phrases such as 'moon-like child' are common. Conversely, while describing the shortcomings of outstanding people, there is a saying in Hindi that 'even the Moon has dark spots', that even something so flawless can display a flaw sometimes.

With the grandeur of mysticism, the Moon has enveloped many fields and avenues of human life. Its pure shining silver white brightness is unique and very special. In fact, the light of the Moon is said to dispel darkness, leading to divinity and providing eternal peace. It is also said to calm the mind. Thus it

could be said that the changing shapes of the Moon indicate the importance of growth and evolution of man.

The phases of the Moon are related to auspicious and inauspicious periods. In the northern hemisphere, the special 'Sharad Poornima' or winter Full Moon (in November) is associated with the 'elixir of life' when a sweet rice pudding (*kheer* in India) is kept out in the moonlight to receive the special radiation of this Full Moon.

In times of grief and sorrow, people take solace from the Moon. Even the Full Moon only gets eclipsed without losing its importance. In major parts of the Arab world, the Moon is the sole dictator of the various functions of Islam, like Eid. Friends use the phrase '*Eid ka chand*' (the special Eid Moon) with affection for friends who are rarely seen.

For children, the Moon provides a fantasy, and so many children's stories are based on the Moon. For example, the old lady with the spinning-wheel who resides in the moon, and many more legends and fables.

The Moon & Sun

The special composition of the Moon's crust and metals was perhaps known to ancient Indians. There is a reference in *The Mahabharata* of such knowledge when Arjun (the expert archer) requests the Moon in his prayers for a very special weapon known as 'Pashupat Astra'. Even today, the moon is attributed with healing qualities. Some experts associate lunacy and schizophrenic patients with the phases of the Moon. Even in Ayurveda, the ancient medical science, many medicines are exposed to moonlight radiations (sunrays reflected from special elements on the Moon's crust) as part of the preparations. Fruits and vegetables also grow in moonlight. No wonder then that the Moon is an inspiration for all positive human values of love, affection, peace, calmness, attraction and acceptance of grief, and also a leading light to higher levels of thinking and admiration of natural beauty.

The Sun is the source of all life, light and energy on this planet and astrology is based on the Sun's principle, ie, 'Surya Sidhhanta'. In essence, the entire calculation of astrology is based on the Sun. Being the pivotal point of our consciousness, the Sun thus plays a very vital role in our day-to-day activities and life. In astrology, the Sun is directly related to the soul which comprises will-power, ego, authority, force, energy and 'I-ness'. The Rig Veda praises the Sun not only as the source of light but also of knowledge for it has the capacity to dispel darkness and ignorance once the person realizes his existence and gets to know his inner consciousness.

The Moon is directly dependent on the Sun for its light. In astrology, the Moon is related to all the activities of the mind connected to materialism as well as spiritualism. Due to the Moon's influence on human beings, man's first attraction is automatically towards materialism. We all know that Moon operates in phases from New Moon to Full Moon, and, in its reversal process, from Full Moon to New Moon.

The Moon & Materialism

Materialism and the Moon's phases are deeply interrelated. The material world exists in man's mind in exactly the same way as the waxing Moon. Materialism increases in man's consciousness in exactly the same way as the Moon keeps increasing in size in the sky. However, there does come a point when the Moon becomes a Full Moon and spreads its glory across the world. Man also assumes the same; that he will be at the highest pinnacle and shine as bright as the Full Moon. Alas, this Full Moon lives for one day and then the waning starts and the Moon loses all its glory and becomes totally dark. In the same way Man's glory is short-lived, and his hopes and aspirations decline. Unfortunately, the mirage does not end here. It is cyclical like the Moon, and the same saga repeats itself endlessly. The only end is the path if spiritualism.

To know your soul or be one with your consciousness, one has to return to the core of ones being. Here lies the importance

of the Sun, the energy that guides the mind to merge with a Higher Being, thus ending the duality of existence forever. To be infinite one has to come out from the finiteness of his being. The purpose of life is to understand the existential process of the being; and start becoming one with the eternal reality. The phases of the Moon are very well understood by yogis who take total aid from different phases of the Moon to know the inner changes in their psychological state. The self-transformation or enlightenment are deeply connected with the Moon. The Moon provides two complete points of self-realization — when it is totally blossoming, ie, a Full Moon, and when it is merged with the Sun (soul), ie, *Amavasya* (Dark night). Legends remind us that Buddha attained enlightenment on a Full Moon day and that Mahavir was transformed on *Amavasya* (Diwali day).

Moon's influence on mind

In astrological parlance, the Moon is directly associated with the mind and therefore our feelings and emotions, lows and highs are directly connected with the Moon. Carl G Jung, the founder of Analytical Psychology, has also established the influence of Moon on our subconscious and unconscious mind. Conditioning of the mind is directly linked with the Moon in the horoscope. The Sun represents the direct ego or conscious approach of Man wherever Moon connects us with our conditioning. All of us develop certain kinds of conditioning towards things, people and situations. Unlearning of mind is the main job of the person to learn in this life. Unfortunately, most of our actions or decisions surface from the subconscious or unconscious mind. Psychologists believe that man and his background and circumstances are responsible for this thoughts. However, it is the Moon, and each and every individual's horoscope, that decides his or her conditioning to a great extent.

In astrology, the Sun denotes the masculine source of energy whereas the Moon denotes the feminine reservoir of force. The Sun represents the father figure and the Moon denotes the

mother figure in astrological parlance. This is the basic division found across astrology. On a serious note, the Moon represents the mind, which is a set of thoughts and an idea is sub-set of thoughts. Desires are nothing but thoughts and desire can be classified into three: desire for sensual pleasure, desire for accumulation (greed) and desire for name and fame. Generally, a mind operates on these three levels and remains entangled in this throughout life. There is a beautiful story about the birth of the Moon and the different stages of his desire. In astrology, the Moon represents both sources of energy-male and female.

An Obsession

According to the epic, Shrimad Bhagavad, the Moon, was born to sage Atri and his wife Anusuiya. The Moon is believed to exist in all human beings. In totality, there are 16 kinds of arts which can be mastered and the Moon is understood to have conquered them all. It is also believed that Lord Krishna who knew all the 16 arts was born to the Moon's family (Chandra vansh). Lord Brahma made the Moon the king of seeds, medicine, water, and also of Brahmins, who were considered most knowledgeable amongst all the communities.

The Moon married 27 daughters of King Daksha, about which there is a beautiful story. King Daksha had 60 daughters. Rohini was the most beautiful daughter and an expert in all the arts. When the Moon saw her, he instantly fell in love with her. The Moon approached King Daksha with the intention of asking for Rohini's hand in marriage. The king stipulated a condition, that to marry Rohini the Moon would have to marry his 26 other daughters too. The Moon was so obsessed with Rohini's beauty that he instantly agreed to marry all the 27 daughters of King Daksha. After his marriage to the king's daughters, the Moon did not entertain any of the other 26 wives, and started living happily with Rohini. It is believed that the Moon and Rohini enjoyed marital bliss for a thousand years. The other 26 wives of the Moon objected to this but the Moon did not pay any

heed. Fed up of his behaviour, the 26 daughters of King Daksha complained to their father. The king tried to argue with the Moon who simply ignored him. Annoyed by his son-in-law's obnoxious behaviour, King Daksha cursed the Moon that it would turn black immediately. This is known as Amavasya or the dark phase when the Moon is not visible in the sky.

The interesting anecdote not only explains the Moon's behaviour, to some extent, but ours too, in a way. In astrology, the Moon represents the mind, subconscious and, to some extent, the collective unconscious of mankind. It is believed that before the Moon becomes dark, there is a *Poornima* or Full Moon every time. The Moon becomes dark because of the curse and it affects not only the 27 daughters of King Daksha but entire mankind too. Since there was no electricity during the early days of man's existence, nights used to be bright because of the Full Moon. Subsequent to the king's curse, everything changed; the nights became dark and life became miserable. A hue and cry was raised by people from all walks of life and they approached King Daksha asking him to undo his curse. At first, the king was reluctant but later told the people's representatives that he was willing to make certain amendments to his curse, provided the Moon too accepted his mistakes and promised not to repeat the same in future. The Moon, on his part, was unwilling to do anything since he was perturbed and depressed. The representatives of the people, including saints and sages, again went to the king and asked him to pardon the Moon. The king, who was still unhappy with his son-in-law, agreed to make certain amendments to his curse. The king said that each night would not be a Full Moon, but that the Moon would increase in size everyday, remaining full on one day and then start reducing in size once again.

In astrology, the Moon refers to the personality. The personality is a multifaceted vehicle by which the individuality of a person is expressed. For instance, a man is different at home or with wife or beloved, but he will be completely

professional at work. When he is confronted with difficulties, then either he becomes tough or starts running from the scene. Man has to adapt himself to various situations in order to live up to the circumstances prevailing at that moment. The Moon represents the collective unconscious of human kind.

In the story of the Moon and King Daksha's daughter Rohini, there is an indication that whenever the mind is focused, it becomes hell-bent upon acquiring its object of focus. The mind is intricately woven with many complexities which are reflected in the behaviour of the Moon. Although the Moon agrees to marry all the other 26 daughters of King Daksha, it was not really interested in any of them. Their conjugal life of a thousand years depicts that whenever the mind is set on something which pleases it, time does not matter. A thousand years may be an exaggeration, but the story tells us that an obsessed mind does not know its limits; even if wisdom tries to intervene at this stage, the obsessed mind fails to pay heed, just as the Moon ignored his father-in-law, King Daksha, when the latter tried to put some sense into it.

It is strange that whenever the mind is caught doing something willfully wrong, it begins to sulk and refuses to sort out the situation logically. Often, the mind tries to extract sympathy from others. The people affected by the dark nights approached King Daksha to pardon the Moon. Wisdom (in this case, King Daksha) asked the Moon to repent for his mistakes but the Moon failed to relent. Ultimately, King Daksha modified his curse such that the Full Moon would not remain constant but keep increasing and reducing constantly. Another peculiarity of the mind is that it is willing to suffer or pay the price for its wrongdoings because it is capable of repentance the same way as it is capable of enjoying the pleasures of life.

Stories & their Meanings

Isaac Newton stumbled upon the theory of gravitational force when he saw an apple falling from the tree. Although countless

apples have fallen to the ground, no one really observed the phenomenon as Newton did. The same way, the Moon has been waxing and waning since eternity, but the story of King Daksha and the Moon gives it a new dimension or understanding.

Indians are great story-sellers; they have stories for all seasons, people, demigods, gods, etc. Stories convey certain meanings: sometimes hidden, sometime obvious and there is a definite message in all the stories.

There are 27 constellations which are represented by the 27 wives of the Moon. The Moon visits every constellation once a month and completes its cycle of the earth in approximately 27¼ days. Of the two fortnights of a month, one is bright and the other dark. During the bright fortnight, the Moon waxes and during the dark fortnight, it wanes. Every month has one Amavasya (dark night) and one *Poornima* (Full Moon night). The Moon owns the constellation Rohini and becomes exalted in Taurus sign where this constellation is situated. The colour of the Moon is milky white. It is well versed in all the 16 arts, which makes the human being special. Lord Krishna had mastered all these 16 arts. The Moon is the lord of the pantheon of *devtas* (gods), *pitra* (forefathers), *yaksha* (demons), spirits, beasts and trees. Lord Brahma has entrusted the Moon with the responsibility to provide the force of life to seeds, medicines, water and Brahmins. The Moon rules over rice, white clothes, silver, white flower, sugar and bull. The gemstone of the Moon is the pearl.

CHAPTER FIVE

Man Thinks God is Indebted to him

Our Subconscious Connection with God

Man has a deep-rooted, unconscious connection with God. He remembers God when he suffers great pain, like when injuring a limb, and then shouts out God's name; the same applies in moments of ecstasy when God is remembered. Thus, unknowingly, God plays a very important role in all our lives. In Christianity, Jesus Christ remembered his Father with total consciousness while being crucified, and his compassion is without any boundary when he asks God to forgive those who know not what they are doing. Mahatma Gandhi's last words before his gruesome death were 'Hey Ram'.

There is yet another facet to our relationship with God — commercialization. As with most of our relationships, with God, too, we maintain an attitude and relationship of pure commerce. We make many offerings to God — food, money, clothes, orgnaments, etc. — and are willing to make sacrifices at every stage provided we are compensated for our efforts accordingly. Some of us appease our Gods with great regularity, while others do so only in times of dire need. This pattern of reciprocal appeasement usually flows uninterrupted until we human beings hit a major road block.

When We Question God

The dynamics of man's relationship with God changes drastically when something goes wrong or when an undesirable event unfolds in his life. This is when man begins to doubt His existence and starts getting confused about his own. It is from this point that man enters into the paradoxical world where he begins to debate in his mind His existence. Right from childhood, man's image and perception of God is so limitless that it cannot be discarded easily. In times of adversity and doubt man usually ponders upon his own shortcomings and ends up wanting to make certain amendments. In this process, man makes intrepid attempts to get the desired results, which had eluded him despite his best efforts in the first place. And, there are always people about to tell man how his best efforts were never good enough and therefore he has failed.

By this time, man's circumstances have already brought him to a situation or point where he is more than willing to do anything to please his deity. He is ready to act on somebody else's suggestions or on knowledge he has acquired through other sources. Thus, inspired by a new hope and objective, man starts his journey towards God afresh, with more sincerity this time. He is willing to sacrifice his hunger and sleep for certain rituals which can fulfill his desire. During this process he also arrives at an understanding of how certain pilgrimages and shrines, where people throng, can help him achieve his desired objective. Invariably he thinks that this new methodology or approach works in his favour and can give good results and he persists in his endeavours. However, for some, these efforts do not bear any fruits or desired results either and this allows frustration to set in. He imagines the worst — that hidden forces have conspired against him, and his appeal has been rejected by God. His new found trust touches rock bottom and he is utterly confused. Thus, this rejected man haplessly rejects everybody else, including existence.

At this juncture, man's life journey comes to a halt, but only for a while. During this period, he may refuse any ideas that enter his head and he may want to be left alone as he comes to terms with life. Through this time of doubt it is man's deep-rooted trust in existence that sees him through and drives him he starts looking for new options. However, it is also a period when he will not be easily influenced by anyone.

God, Man's Best Friend

Man's first approach at this critical juncture of his life would be to find refuge in either a different religion or alternative spiritual faith. A sacred book written by a saint or spiritual leader can also inspire him. In addition, ideas, philosophy or sacred places can also enable him to rebuild his trust. The sacred places have a magical impact on his being because they are known for being connected with our collective unconscious and they are a source of unmatched inspiration to all of us. Many great stories revolve around sacred sites, and many spiritually or materialistically wounded have been healed at these places. Most often, our visits to such places are a case of the blind leading the blind. That is, we go because others are going. However, the impact of these sacred sites is so great and deep-rooted that it cannot be negated easily. It is true that very few have first hand positive experiences of these sacred sites, and that others usually just follow blindly. But since the whole exercise is based on result orientation, any negative result brings man back to the point where he started.

Primarily, man thinks that God is his best friend who can guide and help him in all eventualities. This trust can also be a problem if his desired results elude him. Man can blame Him easily; he is partial when he finds people with low morals and attitudes enjoying the best results. Man's fluctuating faith and trust do not allow him to trust God fully. Gradually he turns his sight away from this best friend and becomes neutral. Sometimes man even becomes inimical and thinks that God is not his friend.

Man's problem is that he cannot become God's friend like Arjuna did. Arjuna, who was transformed with His blessings. Nor does man have the guts of Ravana or Kansa who not only treated God as their enemy, but also tortured Him. Ravana abducted Rama's wife and tormented her. Kansa, too, treated Krishna's mother Devki in a very inhumane fashion. Both these demons were killed by one God and were liberated from Karma.

Vedas & Yagyas

The Vedas, the scripture of the Hindus explain the unfolding pattern of results very differently. As we are aware, there are four Vedas: Rigveda, Atharveda, Yajurveda, and Samaveda. Rigveda and Samaveda establish the importance of *yagyas* although the *yagyas* are the reference point of all the Vedas. The Vedas delve deeply into *yagyas* and distinguished them into two. Man, too, has learned to understand and distinguish the two *yagyas*. As a rule, people understand *yagya* to be an outwardly ritual consisting of a *havan kund* (fireplace), wood and other sacred *samagri* (items of sacred significance). Learned *rishis* perform the yagyas and invite and evoke the deities, with certain specific results in mind. This is the picture that immediately comes to mind when someone mentions *yagya.*

While performing a *yagya*, all kinds of precautions are adhered to. This means every single minute is taken into account and every action/ritual is synchronized to perfection with other rituals. Simultaneously, Vedic mantras are recited to invite a particular deity and associated purity and sacredness; this is a process in which one cannot err and every action must progress systematically. When purity, sacredness, and honesty of purpose is kept intact and learned men or *rishis* perform the *yagya* then the desired deity gives the desired results for which purpose the *yagya* was performed. For ages this has been our general understanding of the importance of a *yagya*. We still think that the *yagya* will create purity — ecological and environmental — and we still have faith in the *yagya.*

The Rigveda emphatically explains another meaning of *yagya* and this is of great significance. Whenever somebody wants big results or wants to do something big in life then the Rigveda suggests that he should take a vow (*sankalp*) with total faith and understanding and consciousness. His resolve should be absolute. After the resolve is made, one should analyse the kind of effort, dedication, and involvement that is required to fulfil that resolve. The Rigveda also suggests a huge difference between the 'resolve' and its 'completion'. Therefore, one should willingly understand how to execute the process to achieve the desired end. If one is willing to perform this kind of *yagya* then the Vedas promise the desired results.

Demigods & *Aam Aadmi*

All around us we witness many people taking a resolve and then performing a necessary *yagya* towards the achievement of that resolve. We see that these people are successful in their attempts and achieve the desired results. In short, these people are the demigods. They include great sports people, musicians, actors, scientists, activists, social workers, artists, and political leaders. This list is by no means exhaustive. What we can draw from this example is this. There is a miniscule difference between the *aam aadmi* and the special *aadmi* or who we might consider the demigod. It is very difficult to find that one person on this earth who does not make a resolve and work on it. But the real difference lies in how stringently one adheres to the resolve taken. Most mortals make very small resolves and work towards them, but keep changing that resolve. Most people fall under this category. Without much thought they make a resolve and create a *havan kund*. But they do not light the fire even though they put in all sorts of *samagri* which is why their achievements are for themselves and they do not give a *disha* or direction to others.

Those who have created history and attained immortality have understood the real science of *yagyas*. About 2,300 years

ago, a wise man called Chanakya could not bear the corrupt and inhuman approach of Dhanananda, the king of Magadh. Chanakya was compelled to take a resolve to end his rule under a very compelling situation when he was inhumanly treated and thrown out of the court (*durbar*) of the kingdom of Magadh. To fulfil his resolve and attain freedom for the people of Magadh he noticed the potential in a young boy, Chandragupta. Chanakya took Chandragupta under his wing and painstakingly trained him against the tyrant king. As we all know, Chanakya went on to establish a new king — Chandragupta Maurya — and create a new kingdom and environment that united India for a long period of time. Chanakya's was a unique brain, and he was a master of politics, administration and society. In addition, he understood the significance of money and politics and, in fact, wrote a great book called Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. In the last century, Mahatma Gandhi did the same thing for the world. He gave us two new weapons with which to control the menace of this world — satyagraha and non-violence.

Yagyas in Mythology

Yagyas are the ancient doctrine of Indian mythology which were widely used in Vedic times. This is also why the *yagyas* are deeply-rooted in our collective psyche. *Yagyas* are pre-Vedic and widely practiced by both demons and gods (*devtaas*). When something was impossible to achieve by mere human methods, then applying rituals and appeasement of some gods with complete devotion and sacrifice (which only few could do) helped obtain rare boons for both demons and *devtas*. This has created an imbalance — political, ecological and social then certain *yagyas* are done with the help of Gods and *devtaas* to create a balance.

Here, we are reminded of two of these *yagyas*. One was done by King Janak with the help of *devtaas* when there was a drought for 12 years and Ravana and his demons created an imbalance on earth. Subsequently, Sita was born from the Earth,

Ravana was ultimately killed and balance was eventually restored. During the time of the Mahabharata, when the imbalance was created, King Drupad had perfomed a *yagya*. The result: Draupadi was born out of one of the *yagyas* and she, with her presence and support, restored balance to this earth.

Various types of *yagyas* are mentioned in the ancient literatures. Some of these yagyas were performed after the victory of kings. On his return to Ayodhya, Rama performed the famous *yagya* called the Ashwamedha Yagya. We have also read of the Rajasuya Yagya being performed by the Pandavas. But among all the *yagyas,* the *yagya* performed with one resolve is the Supreme *yagya*.

Krishna crosses all the frontiers and establishes a new doctrine of karma where the manifestation of results is not in the hands of the doers. During the discourse of the *Bhagavad Gita,* Arjuna asks Krishna, initially out of sorrow and frustration but later as a serious debate, all kinds of questions with seemingly unending curiosity. Before Krishna propounds the theory of desirelessness he says categorically that until and unless one does not understand what he is doing he will keep reaping the results of his past deeds. This also refers to man's many previous births. He says due to ignorance man does repetitive things and remains ignorant for many births. If he cannot make a radical change in himself then whatever deeds he has done in this birth and the previous affect the results of this life.

Here lies the importance of astrology. According to the Vedas, which were written 5,000 years ago, the real meaning of the Vedas was to understand the science of the stars. Astrology is based on the principle of ones past and present karmas. If one wants to get rid of the whole karmic process then Krishna has described four simple ways or *margs*. He gives top priority to Gyan Yoga because with knowledge all darkness is dispelled and total enlightenment takes place. Yoga *marg* is another way by which a person attains the statehood of a yogi and liberates himself forever. Karma marg or total action enables the follower

of this path to free himself from the hassle of results. If all these three *margs* are difficult then the Bhakti Marg or total surrender is the simplest way to attain salvation. Meera reached the pinnacle of Bhakti and is the greatest example of Bhakti Yoga. If man follows any one of these with full dedication and devotion then he understands the importance of the other three also. As a matter of fact there is no ambiguity in any of these ways or *margs*.

There have not been many people who have followed these *margs*. Had this happened, the world would have been a different place today. It would not be as chaotic as it is. The source of energy or light lies within all of us and if one can ignite that then one can understand the importance of *yagya* or the ultimate knowledge of the *Bhagvad Gita*. Once this state is obtained then one will not get into the nitty gritty of understanding God. Man is incapable of understanding the existence of God without understanding his own existence. As a matter of fact, there is no difference between both. The day this knowledge dawns upon us, darkness and ignorance will be removed.

CHAPTER SIX

Importance of Nakshatras

The reference to *nakshatras* is found in the Rigveda. However, the complete list of *nakshatras* is found in both the Yadurveda and the Atharveda. In both the Vedas, the listing begins from Krittika. *Nakshatras* names are based on their ruling Vedic deities; they reflect the ancient gods like *Vayu* (wind), *Agni* (fire) and *Surya* (Sun) etc. Vedic *nakshatras* have a deeper spiritual meaning of the cosmos. The *nakshatras* are also considered the abode of our karmas, good or bad. Primarily, *nakshatras* are considered the mansions or asterisms of the Gods. They are fully capable of projection —positive and negative divine force — just like the planets. *Nakshatras* are also considered fixed stars.

The term *nakshatra* has a deeper meaning. According to one interpretation, *naksha* + *tra* is *naksha* or effort or approach and *tra* meaning worship. The root *naksha* behind the term *nakshatra* means effort, worship or achieve. *Tra* suggests instrumentality. In other words, *nakshatra* has the capacity to connect the human mind with the cosmic mind. Another meaning of *nakshatra* is something that which never decays. This name is given to a constellation or mansion of the Moon, and the Moon resides in each of these asterisms for one day. There are 28 *nakshatras* but for astrological purposes only 27 are considered. The 28th *nakshatra* is called Abhijeet

which has a very deep mythological connection with the birth of Lord Krishna and is now generally used for a *mahurat* or electional astrology.

All these *nakshatras* can be found in Arabian and Chinese astrology too. However, the same does not hold true for western astrology. The zodiac is made of 12 houses and each house is of 30 degrees. Therefore the total zodiac is of 360 degrees; and it further consists of 27 constellations. The length of each constellation is 13.20 degrees. Each constellation is further divided into four parts (*pad*) 3.20 degrees. Each sign is made up of two and a quarter constellations.

Sign & *Nakshatra*

There is a deep relationship between cosmic signs and the fixed stars. Signs and fixed stars are considered the passive energy fields that provide the perfect environment for planets that are considered active cosmic creative forces. The Moon and the constellations or the fixed stars have a special relationship for Man as well as the Universe. The presence of Moon in a particular constellation establishes the relationship between the good and bad deeds of the person, personality, behaviour, attitude, etc. All attributes connected to that constellation come to play their cosmic role throughout a person's life. Each constellation provides a certain amount of freedom and possibility to the person to fulfill his hopes and aspirations in this birth. At the same time, every constellation poses challenges and impediments in the growth of the inner as well as outer personality. The world is a manifestation of Purush and Prakriti, that is, matter and spirit. Purush or spirit is the ultimate magnetic force; the world comes into existence when he unites with Prakriti or matter. The imprint of this great evolution is evident on the entire cosmos. The intelligence of the cosmos can be studied through the solar system. This is how astrology came into being: to know through the movement of luminaries and planets the effect on signs and stars, ie, *nakshatras*. The Sun

represents the soul of the universe and individuals too: the Sun is considered a masculine force. Moon represents the feminine source of energy of the entire universe. The Moon gets light and energy from the Sun. Human beings, karma, actions, deeds, feelings, emotions and attitudes, possibilities, impediments, all are connected with the Moon, and the constellations are the source of this. This is why their study is so important. This is what helps one know the possibilities and drawbacks. The *nakshatras* are the keepers of the consciousness according to past birth deeds. They provide individuals with infinite possibilities to evolve themselves. Needless to say, many people have transformed themselves and become enlightened.

Role of *Gunas*

Prakriti (nature) or matter is made of three *gunas* or attributes. The general sequence of these *gunas* is as follows: *Satvik, Rajsik* and *Tamsik.* However, in astrology, the sequence of *gunas* is different and we first study *Rajsik, Tamsik* and *Satvik.* This sequence seems to be more adequate according to the role of these *gunas. Rajsik gunas* indicate the inner desire and passion to create something new using possible might and force. At this stage, action is the primordial force which wants to establish its 'I-ness' by getting desirous results. Achievements at this stage fulfill the basic need of ego which again operates at two levels. On the higher level, intuitive wisdom wants to lead the ego at a *satvik* level where the ego's subtle desire is to merge with light or be a part of truth. However, at the lower level, the illusionary world takes over completely and pulls down the ego at the *tamsik* or inertia level.

At the *rajsik* level, action is overloaded with desire and the result becomes the sole purpose of existence; the ego cannot look beyond it and loses completely at the level of compassion. The ego is overcome by possession, and clinging or attachment takes centre stage. This process automatically drags down the ego at the *tamsik* level. This stage is also

known as darkness and is completely overpowered by inertia; here negativity comes to the fore. It is very essential for ego to experience total darkness or inertia at the deepest layer of its being before it makes a quantum jump to another level. The ego starts its journey with action at the *rajsik* level and suffers a fall into inertia and in this process experiences both states at the optimum level. This is a very important phase for ego to go into the deeper level of its black hole before it emerges at the next level. The *satvik* level denotes light, truth and purity of its being.

Let us draw an analogy of ocean and waves with sea as *prakriti* and ripples as *gunas* to understand this phenomenon more clearly. When the waves get high with the tides this phenomenon represents the *satvik* attributes. Waves also have the tendency to go deep down into the sea like in a whirlpool, and this denotes that the *tamsik gunas* are in operation. However, when the sea is at peace and we don't find any movement of waves, this is when the *satvik gunas* are playing their role. Sea and waves share a deeper connection; the sea can exist without the waves but the same cannot apply for the waves. It is very difficult to separate *prakriti* from the *gunas* but the basic purpose of life is to understand the intricacies of *gunas* and be above from them.

For a deeper understanding of *gunas,* signs and constellation can be divided into three groups and each group comprises three signs and nine constellations.

ATTRIBUTES OF *RAJSIK GUNAS*

The first four signs from Aries to Cancer which comprises nine constellations come under *rajsik gunas. Rajsik gunas* indicate action and an urge to impregnate the surrounding with ones total action. Aries is the first cardinal sign and is of the element fire, ruled by the dynamic planet Mars. The first constellation of the zodiac is Ashwini, which represents the face of a horse, and again indicates that energy is ready to burst into action without

bothering about the consequences. The lord of Ashwini *nakshatra* is Ketu. Ketu operates at two extremes: one is based on intuitive wisdom and the other is a total illusionary approach. When we analyze the ingredients and evolution of the cosmos we find a befitting answer because to begin something new there has to be a great urge and for that *rajsik gunas*, or action, is the only option. Everything revolves around action. The fire is the ancient source of energy. It is ready to go out to create something new. The needed force is provided by the Martian planet Mars, and unawareness of consequences is directly related to the constellation ruled by Ketu.

The second sign of this series is Taurus, of fixed nature and its element is earth; Venus is the ruler of this sign. The infinite force of Mars generated in the sign of Aries manifests in this sign because earth or nature provides the right kind of environment for the ego to grow in different directions. The third sign is Gemini, dual in nature and ruled by the intelligent planet Mercury. The divine spark which starts its journey from Aries exhibits human feelings because in Gemini the masculine and the feminine energies take shape and move forward. The last sign of this group is the cardinal sign Cancer ruled by the Moon; its element is water. The *rajsik* attributes, which manifest first in fire, take deeper seat in the midst of water. *Rajsik gunas* which inflate the ego because of achievements start taking very deep root in the cosmic as well as human psyche. The process of creation, the initial aim of which is objective, starts becoming subjective when it reaches the cardinal sign Cancer, ie, water. In astrology, water represents our own deeper psyche which has an almost permanent impression of things, events and situations until the person is ready to totally transform himself.

ATTRIBUTES OF *TAMSIK GUNAS*

The zodiac is assumed to be of 360 degrees, further divided into three parts each of 120 degrees. These three angles together form a beautiful trine. In the second division, there are four signs,

namely, Leo, Virgo, Libra and Scorpio, which comprises nine constellations. The first constellation of this group is Magha and the last is Jyestha. This division begins with the sign Leo which is fire and the lord of this sign is Sun. Magha constellation represents our ancestors who are the operating force between our world and *devlok.* They are deeply concerned about our well-being and in India we still seek guidance from our ancestors. Ketu is the lord of this *nakshatra*. In the previous *rajsik* group, the first *nakshatra* of Ashwini ruled by Ketu indicated an abrupt but forceful beginning. In its second avatar (form) Ketu demonstrates our past linkage as well as our karmic process. It is noteworthy that the last constellation of this division is Jyestha which falls in the end of Scorpio. Jyestha refers to our elders. In other words, the karmic process begins with our ancestors (Ketu) and ends with our elders who will be the custodian of our spirits, and to take us into the next level of our evolution.

Leo, the first sign of this division, is fixed by nature and its element is fire. The Sun itself represents fire, but it is quite different when compared to the devastating fire of Mars. This is a controlled fire which has the capacity to transform the soul from its karmic bondage provided the soul is not entangled with worldly pleasures, seeking activities and satisfying its superfluous ego. The entire division is controlled by *tamsik gunas* which contribute at a negative level and the ego gets deeply attached with 'I-ness' and becomes over possessive. Gradually, inertia takes over and the ego gets totally absorbed in materialism and is unwilling to move further for a long time. The second sign of this group is Virgo, an earthly sign, of dual nature, ruled by the logical and reasoning planet Mercury. The earth plays an important role in the process of ones understanding and helps the ego to overcome its darkness or inertia with understanding and servitude. To this, Mercury adds its discriminating qualities which help to distinguish between right and wrong.

The next sign of this group is Libra, which is a cardinal sign; the element here is air and the ruling planet of this sign is Venus.

This is the seventh sign of the zodiac which provides balance, to some extent, but possessiveness remains the core issue. Worldly achievements or material gains do not satiate the ego and lust still prevails. The last sign of this division is Scorpio, which is full of mystery and is of fixed nature. The element of this sign is water and it is ruled by Mars. This is the second rulership of Mars; its first rulership was Aries. In Aries we experience Mars, which is full of positive fire, eager to burst into action right from the word go. Scorpio can be interpreted as a huge pond with infinite depth and contains tremendous mystery of the hidden and unknown world. Primarily, Mars represents fire but when it comes to Scorpio it is converted into latent heat which is equally penetrating and is in a position to shatter the inner inertia; and in the absolute darkness one can sow the seed of the next stage.

ATTRIBUTES OF *SATTVIK GUNAS*

In this last division, there are four signs — Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces. The four signs are made up of nine *nakshatras,* starting from Mula to Revathi. The meaning of Mula is the roots, and this *nakshatra,* located at the galactic centre, intersects the zodiac, which further emphasizes its spiritual influence. The galactic centre is also known as a creative force or Bharma. As stated earlier, this division begins with Mula, the roots, and ends with Revathi, the great womb, in which the Sun dwells in dormant mode until the impulse of the next creative cycle begins. At this stage, matter merges in pure essence into the spirit where God's messenger in the human world, Mercury, dominates. Mula is ruled by Ketu, a spiritual planet, and Moksha Karka (liberated of the soul). At this stage, ego comes out from its subjective bondage and starts becoming a part of the whole process. The soul no longer wants to cling with its lower being, and its elevation begins gradually until it becomes a part of light.

Sagittarius, the first sign of this division, is of dual nature; its element is fire and it is ruled by the auspicious planet Jupiter. We

see in all these three groups that the main element which plays an important role is fire. Fire transforms itself, from one stage to another. If, in Aries, fire has primitive force, then it becomes a source of energy in the second group that starts with Leo. In Sagittarius, it no longer remains mere fire but transforms itself into light which can guide the soul towards its destination, ie, liberation. The lord of this sign is Jupiter whose basic job is to guide, being the guru of the universe. The *nakshatra* Mula (the roots) suggests that soul relocates its roots and starts a new journey where *satvik* impulse or truth will prevail. The symbol of Sagittarius is very meaningful: man sitting on a horse aiming somewhere in the future with his bow and arrow and his feet are grounded. The sign is of dual nature and indicates that there is no eagerness of Aries, which is a cardinal sign, and not stagnant like Leo, which is fixed. Here duality suggests that changes can be and will be incorporated as and when they become a necessity in the path of growth of the soul.

The next sign in the group is Capricorn, an earthy and cardinal sign, ruled by Saturn. In these three divisions, we face the earth element for the third time. In the first group, we encountered Taurus as an earthly sign but of fixed nature which denotes that within certain paraphernalia, the ego can operate being unaware of its soul's element. In the second group, Virgo is an earthly sign and of dual nature, indicating that new seeds of humanity were taking place to an extent. However, in Capricorn, the cardinal earth which is movable (cardinal) has deeper meaning when ego wants to clear all its earlier confusions or debts and be on the path of purification. Saturn is the ruler of this sign which helps the ego to be clear of its dust and its load and be light and ready for the next stage of evolution.

The next sign of this group is Aquarius, which is of fixed nature, its element is air, and it is ruled by Saturn. Space is the domain of Aquarius, which helps the soul to move around the entire space and be one with nature. Aquarius is a human sign and the symbol of Aquarius is a man carrying a pitcher full of

water on his shoulder, and the water is overflowing. Humanity plays an important role and the soul becomes a part of the whole and discriminations starts coming to an end. Saturn is a planet of renunciation and helps the soul to understand the meaninglessness of 'I-ness' and division of vision should come to an end.

Pisces is the last sign of this series which is of dual nature, its element is water and it is ruled by a benevolent planet, Jupiter. We have encountered the water element twice before in the earlier groups. First we encountered it in Cancer where water was in constant flow, which makes a primordial force in constant action throughout. We come across water in Scorpio also but this water is of fixed nature, and known for its depth which leads the ego and the soul to the mysterious world. The nature of Pisces indicates a huge ocean where soul merges and finds oneness with the whole; and no longer wanders in isolation. In other words, soul (*atma*) becomes a part of absolute reality (*parmatma*).

The symbol of Pisces is two fish attached by their tails and making an endless circle or journey.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Nakshatra Meditation Technique – I

Custodian of Karma

Nakshatras are the custodian of our past birth deeds. All our karmas are stored there. According to Vedic philosophy it is also believed that this is neither the beginning of a birth cycle nor an end. Life remains an ongoing process and the soul takes innumerable forms till such time that illusion (*maya*) does not get dissolved and then liberation takes place. The real purpose of life is to know thyself or oneself. During the sojourn of a birth cycle, man experiences life at different levels and gets attached as well as entangled with almost everything which he experiences. *Gunas* (attributes) play a major role hence attachment happens automatically. There are three *gunas — sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. When they join *prakriti* or nature of eight aspects — earth, water, fire, air, ether or *aakash,* mind, intellect and ego become identical. *Gunas* gain importance when distinction is to be made in the temperament and attainment of individual souls. Otherwise in the aggregate, *gunas and prakriti* are synonymous with each other.

Prakriti or the *maya shakti* inherent in *Ishwara* is also known as *swabhava* (human nature). An individual's karma is based on variation in three *gunas.* Karma leaves its *samsakara* or impression on the minds of *jeevatma* or soul. During the journey of birth cycle *samsakaras* get refined and accordingly

they modify the *swabhava* or nature of the soul. Karma and *swabhava* are deeply interrelated and inseparable. Therefore when one takes birth in this life it is in accordance with his *samaskara* which he has gained in his previous births. According to the past birth deeds, one takes birth in a particular *nakshatra* on this planet and continues his journey.

Big role of *Nakshatra*

Birth *nakshatra* plays a very important role in ones life. The soul of Vedic astrology lies in *nakshatra.* When a person takes birth on this planet then his birth *nakshatra* is decided by the placement of Moon in a particular *nakshatra.* The first alphabet of an individual's name is also decided by the longitude of the Moon in a particular *nakshatra.* The birth *rashi* or Moon sign is also decided by the placement of Moon in a particular *nakshatra* as well as sign (*rashi*). All other nine planets including *lagna* or ascendant also occupy different *nakshatras* according to their longitudes in the sky. But the importance of *janamkalik* or birth *nakshatra* is immense. *Dasa* system plays a very important role in all of our lives. There is a method by which knowing the placement of Moon in a particular *nakshatra* and sign, *mahadasa* is calculated. This is known as a Vimsottari Dasa which comprises 120 years and all the nine planets are further assigned particular years which they operate accordingly.

Assuming a person lives for 80 years and if at the time of birth according to this calculation he was born in a particular *dasa* then rest *dasa* of planets will follow a predetermined pattern. According to *dasa* system minimum years assigned to one planet, is to Sun for 6 years and maximum number of years allotted to Venus ie, 20 years. All other seven planets are given different number of years according to *dasa* system. For an instance 'A' is born when three years of Ketu's *mahadasa* were remaining at the time of his birth. Then according to this pattern following *dasa* of next 80 years would be of Venus — 20 years, Sun — 6 years, Moon — 10 years, Mars — 7 years, Rahu — 18 years and Jupiter — 16 years. 'A' was

born in remaining Ketu's *dasa* of three years and dies towards the end of Jupiter's *mahadasa* of 16 years. This is the Vimsottari pattern which is applicable to all human beings on this planet.

According to this example A's Moon was in Aries sign and *nakshatra* was Ashwani ruled by Ketu. Ketu's *mahadasa* is of seven years since his Moon was placed at a particular degree at the time of his birth that is why calculation reveals three years of Ketu's *mahadasa* was remaining at the time of his birth. Importance of *nakshatra* is automatically established by this example. When 'A' was three years old, then 20 years of Venus *dasa* operated, taking him upto 23 years of age. After that 6 years of Sun take him upto 29 years of age and this pattern continues till 'A' breathes his last.

The longitude of Moon decides the exact number of years remaining of that particular *nakshatra* in which Moon was placed at the time of his birth. If we take the above case when Venus's *mahadasa* takes place after attaining the age of 3 years and continue till 23 years then the placement of Venus in the chart will decide the pattern of results for 'A' and rest of the planets will follow the same suit. Assuming the birth *nakshatra* and the following planets whose *dasa* is in operation at a particular time in A's age then the pattern of results will be decided by the aligning of these two *nakshatras*. In this case at the time of birth Moon was placed in Ketu's *nakshatra* and *dasa* was in effect till 3 years of age.

From 3 to 23 years of age Venus's *mahadasa* will have total impact on this person's life. If *janamkalik* (birth *nakshatra*) and the planet operating at a particular duration of age are not synchronizing with each other then that *dasa* may not give satisfactory results. The remaining *dasas* which this person has to face in life will follow the same pattern till the end. In other words if 'A' has to get good results till the age of 40 years, then all the planets whose *dasa* will operate till the age of 40 years should be aligned perfectly among the planets occupying different houses/signs. If these planets in question don't

synchronize among themselves then result pattern up to 40 years of age may otherwise.

The *janamkalik nakshatra* has to synchronize with all the planets those dasas this person has to undergo. According to this understanding more than 50 per cent of an individual's life is governed and controlled by the *janamkalik nakshatra*. That is the basic reason that sages have given so much importance to the birth *nakshatra*. As Moon's placement in a particular *nakshatra* and sign (*rashi*) influences the entire life of that person, the same way remaining planets placement in different *nakshatras* also play a very vital role in his life. In our experience we have found there is hardly any synchronization between the birth *nakshatra* and the remaining *nakshatras* in which other planets were placed at the time of an individual's birth. That is the basic reason that everybody's life goes through many ups and downs throughout.

Shape of *Nakshatra*

Right from time immemorial heaven or sky has been given a tremendous importance. Space and time are very important phenomenon of this universe. Ancient man has always found direction by looking at the stars. Since heaven was the source of his information, knowledge, growth and development, he therefore treated the *nakshatra,* stars and planets like gods and sometimes like demons also. It was also believed that the supreme cosmic power was responsible for our life and well-being. And when man dies then again his soul goes back to the heavens and the stars look after him. Therefore *nakshatras* are the real source of spiritual perception of the cosmos.

Every *nakshatra* has been given a particular shape according to the mythological gods or deity. It has been believed by the ancient sages that all the gods played a very important role in the formation of the cosmos. By becoming friendly with a particular god or goddess of the *nakshatra* one can uplift his being to a great level and all kind of healing becomes possible.

Basically *nakshatra* represents a passive field of heightened activities which can ignite by the presence of a planet in it. Moon and *nakshatra* are synonymous with each other and the placement of Moon in a particular *nakshatra* energizes it to the optimum. All *nakshatras* are blessed with particular power or *shakti* and this power is given to that *nakshatra* by its deity. Every *nakshatra* is deeply associated with a particular sign and planet who rules over it.

There are male *nakshatras* as well as female *nakshatras. Gunas* or attributes play an important role in the formation of *nakshatras.* There are three *gunas — sattva, rajas* and *tamas. Sattva guna* indicates purity, light and truth. *Rajas* denotes action and an urge to prove something by taking charge of the things/situation. *Tamas* indicates dullness, inertia and negativity. Human behaviour is decided according to the role of particular *nakshatra* in which he was born. Every *nakshatra* has positive qualities that is why we inherit them and accordingly do good deeds in this birth and uplift ourselves in the realm of materialism as well as spiritualism. However, every *nakshatra* also has negative qualities which become part of our behaviour pattern throughout. These negative traits become an impediment in our growth and we start clinging to those things which create problems in our life. By understanding our inner being we can make a lot of difference, not only in personality but in the quality of life.

Impediments to Growth

To err is human. Over the years (including births) all of us become victim of many vices and they become part of our behavioural pattern. Most of the time none of us are aware where and how, a particular negative trait has unexpectedly surfaced in our attitude. It just needs a right kind of mental environment to show its monstrous face.

These are the most common negative traits which rule out mind and intellect and all of us find ourselves helpless at some

stage or the other. These impediments are — lustful desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride, fear, enmity, envy, lie, dishonesty, cheating, doubts, back-biting, depression, frustration etc.

Over the years all of us do not remain victim of all these impediments. However, some of the negative traits become part and parcel of our personality. You may be a thoroughly honest person and nothing in this world can bring you down from this high moral pedestal. But at the same time you could be an acute victim of attachment. Sometimes good attachments also become an impediment of our growth. They create a great problem in adjusting in this world and become real impediments in the path of spiritual development. Once you can identify your impediments to growth then you can overcome them by following *nakshatra* meditation technique. You need not work on all of them because it is highly unlikely that you will have all negative traits that can be impediments to your growth. All of us know our negative traits and if you have any doubts then while defining *nakshatra* meditation technique, we enable you to be informed of one or two of the impediments which you need to work on.

Nakshatra Meditation Technique

Nakshatra Meditation is a unique way of understanding our hidden potential and by adopting the following techniques one can bring those potentials to the surface. *Nakshatras* are the abode of our karma and the fruit of our karma is stored with them. Each and every *nakshatra* has been assigned a special spiritual role to play in this universe. Right from the beginning of the cosmos, *nakshatras* are playing an important role in the formation, sustenance and growth of the ever-expanding universe. At the same time cosmos and *nakshatra* are the guiding force of all the individuals on this earth. Without our knowing it, most of our activities are directly controlled by *nakshatras* in which we are born. Psychologists also believe

that the subconscious mind plays a very big role in our day to day actions. *Nakshatra* meditation is a technique by which consciously one can bring out the hidden positive qualities to the surface and at the same time get rid of those negative qualities which become an impediment in our growth, development, harmony and peace. I have experimented with *nakshatra* meditation techniques with many people and the results are overwhelming.

Nakshatra meditation techniques are very simple and can be practiced by any individual without the discrimination of caste, creed, religion, or direction. Here are common methods which are required to be done by all the people born in different *nakshatras.* Once you are attuned to your deity, life force or hidden *shakti* then you can become automatically one with you inner being. The moment you connect with your inner source then all the knots — past, present and future start getting opened up and you no longer remain finite as you experience the infinity of your soul. One very important thing to bear in mind is that all the techniques, postures, breathing, symbols, imagination and other methods which become essential in the beginning have no relevance as far as knowing yourself (*atman*) is concerned. Due to ignorance of many births one forgets the real self, the same way one cannot see an image of himself in a dirty mirror. Therefore cleaning of the mirror is a simple method to see the perfect picture of yourself.

Time & Space

Time and space is a universal phenomenon of the manifestation. All physical as well as worldly activities happen within certain time and space. The knowledge of time and space has made man achieve the unachievable on this planet. All kind of growth and development can be interpreted within time and space. Meditation can happen only when one transcends time and space. Transcendent can only be possible after gaining the knowledge of time and space. Therefore, the validity of time and

space cannot be neglected. Time and space is a phenomenon which has been spread all over the universe. Every individual has his own phenomenon of time and space. Basically an individual is a unit of the whole. An individual is the design of the universe therefore if he understands his design then he will become a part of the universe's design.

For an individual time and space has to be understood at the micro level. A day is made of 24 hours and we suggest that if out of 24 hours one can find one hour for oneself that can set the pace of spiritual development. For the universe space is infinite but for a person space is very finite. One needs to find a small space where one can sit at peace for that one hour for the sake of *nakshatra* meditation. Sometimes it is not possible to find an hour for yourself therefore we begin with just half an hour for yourself everyday. Ideally if one can find 40 minutes for oneself in a day that will be the best. One needs to make a conscious decision to spare about 40 minutes for himself everyday to get into the mode of *nakshatra* meditation.

Posture & Breathing Exercises

After finding a space (place) and time for oneself in a garden, under a tree or near the river or any isolated place and if that is not feasible then one can always find a space and time within the home. To begin with sit down in a posture which has been described by Maharishi Patanjali as *padmasan, siddhasan* or *sukhasan. Asana* (posture) is a very essential part of the *nakshatra* meditation. When one is sitting in any of these *asanas* then make sure that your spine and head are erect so the flow of life energy can take place without any interruption.

After sitting in an *asana,* one needs to practice certain yogic breathings. We have developed unique breathing techniques which have been very helpful to the seekers to go into trance. Sit down in a posture and exhale all your breath from the lungs. Once the lungs are emptied then start inhaling gradually and deeply so it touches the core of the spine. After inhaling is

completed, hold your breath as long as you can easily do and during that period while holding your breath start counting 1, 2, 3, ... and put your attention on the base of the spine. After that start exhaling your breath and empty your lungs completely and focus your attention on the top of your head (Sahasrar Chakra). Once you have exhaled completely then hold your breath and start counting 1, 2, 3, ... while your total attention is on the Sahasrar Chakra. Do this yogic breathing for minimum 10 minutes. If you wish you can also recite a short mantra instead of counting numbers, a mantra which you have been doing for a long time. Remember not to do a long mantra otherwise you will lose the rhythm of breathing. If you don't have any mantra and don't want to count numbers, you can say *Om.* This enables you immensely to get attuned with your breathing. Counting or mantra should be done internally without uttering it aloud.

After doing this yogic kriya for say 10 minutes, your mind will disassociate itself from worldly affairs and connect you with your inner self. By this time you will be quite relaxed, peaceful and harmonious with yourself. This yogic breathing will help you to detoxify your body to a great extent. If you do this yogic breathing exercise continuously for 15 days you will find that a lot of toxins from the body have been evaporated. This yogic breathing is a very powerful tool and is absolutely capable of connecting you with your inner being.

We shall recommend the other master's breathing techniques which have been very useful for people over thousands of years. In this regard we had already mentioned the Maharishi Patanjali's breathing technique in the first chapter, 'What is Meditation?' There are universally practiced meditation techniques known as *purak, rechak* and *kumbhak.* We shall describe the whole breathing process while suggesting their breathing technique for particular *nakshatras.* We are open to suggest other breathing techniques of great masters if we find them suitable for our readers.

Focus Your Mind

After completing yogic breathing, focus your attention on your third eye (between the two eyebrows) and relax. Breathe as normally as you can. There is no need to recite any mantra or do any counting. Keep on sitting in the same posture and bring all your attention on the third eye. Now you will find that you are absolutely energetic and all your energy is at your command. Vedic seers were of the opinion that this body is a temple and god resides in it. A man experiences all kinds of (good and bad) karmas through this body. It is also said in Vedic scripture that *devtas* (deities) longed for ages to have human body because without human body, one cannot experience the life at the fullest. *Devtas* know one aspect of life that is pleasure and comforts. But human being experiences every pain that is why pleasure gains importance. Without shades of life, life itself becomes miserable and that has happened to *devtas,* because they know only pleasure. Enlightenment can also be experienced by human beings but not by *devtas.* Therefore, the first purpose of your being is to look after the vehicle (body) which takes care of your soul through many births. The body is a temple and it needs cleansing, caring and supporting each and every organ, tissue and cell of it. Start healing your body from head to toe gradually for the next 10 minutes. If any organ or part of your body is troubling you then pay more attention on that part of your body otherwise keep your body in a relaxed, healthy and happy state. Once you attune with that part of your body which had been a source of anxiety, pain or discomfort for you then you will find the beginning of a healing process intensely with your focused attention. The disturbed organ of your body starts healing. My experiments have shown tremendous results in this regard.

Free Yourself from Past Karma

In the journey of life we do many good things and they make us proud of ourselves. So many times we go out of our way to do

good deeds for people whom we love and care for. These good deeds become a talking point of our conversation all the time and we get attached and think how great we are. Besides this we never forget to remember the hurt and pain induced by our own people whom we love more than ourselves. Many a times all of us go through a process of humiliation in our life, due to those people and situations with whom we were on best of terms. At times we fail to understand what did we do wrong to suffer without any rhyme and reason. In this kind of situation we question ourselves very deeply and want to know the answer. The matter does not end here, we always go and discuss with our people whom we trust the most, why are we in such a situation and why somebody so close to us or maybe unknown to us is inducing pain, hurt, anxiety. Our well wishers more often agree with us and they are also at a loss to find the answer why the suffering exists. This unsolved mystery becomes a deep wound in our psyche and keeps on bothering us.

Whatsoever is true for others same holds truth for us also. We might well have troubled, tortured people knowingly or unknowingly who are either very close to us or absolutely unknown. As time has passed, there is no trace of what we have done in this birth towards others who did not deserve that kind of treatment from us. Over the passage of time all of us tend to forget especially our shortcomings because we are trained to know the faults of others. Therefore we are blissfully ignorant of our past doings.

Your attention is still at the third eye and you are breathing normally. Do this exercise for the next 10 minutes. Try to get rid of all your good deeds which you have done towards others. If you cannot come to an understanding of a non-doer then believe it was in their destiny and you were just an instrument and free yourself from good doings towards others. At the same time if you know that somebody knowingly or unknowingly has harmed you, blocked your growth and development and made your life miserable for a long time just pardon him, forget

and forgive. Whatsoever happened that was in the past and at a particular time and space. That time and space does not exist any longer why should you keep those scars in your mind and space even now. Get rid of those situations and free your conscious from those incidents. If it is not possible in one sitting then in your continuous meditation, meditate on this point and free your soul from the past. You might have tortured, disturbed and bothered many souls on this earth knowingly or unknowingly. No need to go into details of those things. Just sit in your *nakshatra* meditation state and ask all those people to pardon you and bow down to them with your total humility and request them to pardon you once for all. At the same time those who have done wrong to you at any stage of life just pardon them and free your soul from their bad karma.

The beauty of this exercise is that soon you will find that you are free from baggage which you were carrying for ages. Now it does not matter whether this baggage contained gold or dust. Suddenly, you will feel light and weightless inside your body, mind and soul. You can easily bring back your consciousness in the state of now and here. You have experienced your past and don't know what the future holds for you. But the present moment is just alive and vibrating with your breath and being. Be one with your present and you will be astonished to start pulsating with the rhythm of now and here.

Imagination

For the next 10 minutes get yourself in the mode of imagination. If you tell somebody imagine something then he may turn around and say that it is an induced process what purpose it is going to be served. It may look absurd but that is not the case. Imagination has a very deep impact on all of us right from the ages. It has been observed on many occasions when somebody starts imagining that he is becoming weak or sick then within no time that person becomes really so. Western scientists wanted to know how the Lama of Tibet sweats in an

ice cold night with minus temperature and that too sitting naked and in the open. They would never understand the phenomenon which he was adopting. This Lama will sit in the cold in a minus temperature and close his eyes and start imagining that heat is generating in his body. As a matter of fact it is an icy cold night and temperature running into minus degree. This Lama is sitting in that cold and deep down in his being imagining heat is being generated right from his toes to head. After sometime this Lama is sweating and whatsoever he has imagined he has become. Therefore imagination has a huge power. One should know how to use it. The trouble with modern man is that he knows that imagination is a good tool but he does not apply it fully. He starts with faith in the beginning but his trust is not long-lasting and he keeps on switching from one end to another. Therefore desired results elude him. He needs to become Lama and once you are ready to become Lama then whatsoever you imagine that becomes a reality.

In the next 10 minutes you have to imagine what you want and what you want to become. Your imagination should not be based on the wrong ideas and notions. It has to go deep into your being and you should become one with that thought. The moment a person becomes one with that thought then whatsoever looks impossible becomes possible and comes in your reach. In the beginning being a worldly person you focus your mind and attention on what you want to achieve. Until and unless you achieve those things where your mind is totally involved you cannot move further on the findings of your inner self. In this life before getting *moksha* or liberation you need to enjoy all kinds of comforts and luxury which this world provides to the others. You cannot imagine yourself in isolation therefore first attention, intention and involvement will have to be with yourself. If you have not realized worldly goals, how can you think of realizing spiritual goals. If you are an achiever in the worldly goals then the spiritual goals are not far away from you.

While discussing meditation we have objectively generalized the process that is needed to be done by an individual. We shall dwell more into details while discussing *nakshatras.*

Shavasana

After doing entire *nakshatra* meditation technique, just lie down on the ground in Shavasana pose (like a dead body) as long as you can do it easily and relax your body. After that you are free to do anything. During *nakshatra* meditation technique of 40 minutes we invariably say after the first stage of meditation bring your attention on one of your *chakras.* Keep it there for a few seconds and then begin your meditation. After finishing the meditation take your attention back to the *chakra* mentioned and follow this pattern.

Ashwini (0° 0' — 13° 20' Aries)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE NAKSHATRA

Ashwini is the first *nakshatra* of the zodiac which covers 0° 0' to 13° 20' degrees. It consists of three stars in the form of a horse. Ashwini played a big role to the activation of the primordial energy from its state of latency. The first *nakshatra* is concerned with the resurrection of these egos and putting them in order of new cycle. The lord of this *nakshatra* is Ketu, the northern node of the Moon. Ketu, considered a planet of wisdom, rules over impulses and Ashwini was chosen as the first *nakshatra* to provide the impulse required for the beginning of the cosmic cycle. The phenomenon is taking place in the sign of Aries which is represented by the Ram who is full of raw energy and ready to explode with his full might. The needed force and energy is provided by the dynamic sign lord Mars.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The birth story of Ashwini is quite interesting and reveals its cosmic power also. According to mythology, radiance of the Sun

god was so strong that nobody could bear it due to his effulgence. He was left alone and had nobody to share life with him. Marriage seemed impossible. Aditi, mother of the Sun approached her husband Kashyap to do something about it. Kashyap divided the Sun into 12 parts and made each a Sun in its own realm. The Sun of our universe was married to Sangya, the daughter of Tvashtra, also known as Vishwakarma, the celestial architect. Sangya was not able to bear the heat (Fire) of the Sun therefore she went to the jungle for penance because she could not perform the duty of a wife. Before she left the place she instructed her handmaid Chhaya (shadow) to look after her husband.

Sun could not distinguish between the real wife or shadow and started living with Chhaya as a husband. After sometime Sangya came back to the Sun and was very angry to know what was going on behind her back. In her temper she leaves the Sun once again and goes back to the jungle and takes the form of a mare and starts hiding in the jungle from the Sun. When Sun came to know about his real wife, he started following her in the jungle and took the form of a horse and mating took place. This allegory further describes the beginning of solar evolution and provides a hint to the mysterious process of activating the primordial force. Out of this union Ashwini Kumars were born. Ashwinis are blessed with a rejuvenating power and they are the great healers of the cosmos.

Besides its association with power and energy Ashwini is also connected with the seven channels of evolution flaws. The septenary energy channels are described in the Vedas as the seven rivers, *sapta sindhus, sapta rishis* and seven flames of sacrificial fire though Ashwini operates as the main aquaduct through which the seven channels flowed to the world or manifestation. Ashwini also provides necessary environment for Shiva-Shakti-Tattva to play its role at manifestation level. Ashwini asterism represents the Shiva-Tattva while the Shakti Tattva is represented by the second asterism ie, Bharni.

There is another story attached with Ashwinis. There was a *rishi* called Chyavan, who was very old and wanted to marry young princesses. *Rishi* Chyavan approached Ashwini Kumars and requested them to make him young once again. As the story goes, Ashwini Kumars obliged the *rishi*. Ashwini Kumars are nature's physicians who are capable of restoring latent live force without following the ethics of it. They are also involved with cyclic order of manifestation. This *nakshatra* is a source of huge solar energy which is capable of activating new creation. Creative process is deeply related with Ashwini's impulse. Though Ashwini represents the keenness to involve itself in creative mission, it does not have a clear road map which becomes a handicap at times. This is the big drawback which also comes to the fore in the life of people born under Ashwini *nakshatra*.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The basic attribute of this *nakshatra* is *rajas* (activity) which occurs on all levels. The primary motivation of this *nakshatra* is dharma, principle or honour. Sun becomes exalted in this *nakshatra*. Beginning of the cosmos or life cannot happen without the support of *rajsik* attribute. All kind of activities can happen only when *rajsik gunas* (attributes) are functioning. It is only at this stage that ego wants to prove something to itself which cannot happen when other attributes are in prominence. When *satvik* attributes are in operation then ego starts becoming one or merging with knowledge or truth. Since there is nothing left to prove or achieve, therefore eternal calmness dawns and everything becomes serene and peaceful. When *tamas* attributes take over then ego goes into dullness, inertia and non-activity mode. Beginning of the first rays of light which happens at the start of Ashwini *nakshatra* is directly connected with the *rajas* activity.

The motivational force of this *nakshatra* is dharma or honour. Ego may be operating at a *rajas* level but the internal desire is to bring it at an honourable state. The lord of Ashwini

nakshatra is Ketu who basically is a spiritual planet and deeply concerned about the liberation of the soul. Intuitive wisdom operates at the optimum level with missionary zeal. There is danger of getting into an illusionary world because there is a threadlike difference between illusion and intuition. The *atmic* planet Sun gets exalted in this constellation which removes the illusion and helps the soul to get back on the process of self realization. Ketu denotes one more thing here; instead of running for answers outside, if one settles down within oneself then intuitive forces start taking care of the soul.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: Ashwini, Ketu and Mars provide a dynamic environment to the person in which it can cultivate its fierce activities and from where the thirst for life can get manifested. Here, energies are in the process of unification, so it provides a perfect platform for the awakening of consciousness in a particular direction. The Sun becomes exalted in this constellation and hence there is an apparent desire in the subject to establish his authority and leadership.

You are blessed with a dauntless spirit which likes to explore many new dimensions of your personality. Being playful and childlike in nature, you can experience many things that come your way. You are very kind and generous towards people whom you love immensely. You give great importance to your family and friends. You are also very protective about them and the idea of losing them can scare you. Should you sense that you are about to lose them, you throw yourself into pursuing and sustaining the relationship at all cost. At times, you may appear brash in your behaviour to others, but this is only an outcome of loneliness and a sense of insecurity as far as relationships are concerned.

Your Drawbacks: Uncontrollable aggression, impulsiveness, lust and a lack of concern for others are your great weakness. At

times your arrogance and stubbornness can cross all limits, which can definitely land you in trouble. In some cases, a person of this sign follows the path of destruction and brings misery to the lives of innumerable people. You tend to have a fatal attraction towards the opposite sex which could easily bring about your downfall.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASHWINI NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): To begin with sit down in a posture keeping your spine and head erect. Start this exercise with exhaling first. Empty your lungs completely then start inhaling slowly and deeply. When you have inhaled completely hold your breath for some time and start counting 1, 2, 3, ... and if you wish you can recite any short mantra while holding your breath. Bring your entire attention on the base of your spine while you are counting or reciting a mantra. Now start exhaling gradually, empty your lungs completely and hold your breath. While you are holding your breath bring your attention to the top of your head (Sahasrar Chakra) and continue counting or reciting a mantra while you are holding your breath. Do this process for the next 10 minutes. After you have done the exercise then breathe normally and bring your attention on the third eye between the two eyebrows. Keep sitting in the same posture.

Second Stage (10 minutes): In the second stage, your attention is already on the third eye and you keep sitting in the same posture and focus your mind on the third eye. Gradually start healing your body from head to toe. If any part of your body is paining, aching or weak then bring all your attention and start healing it gradually. For instance if your knee troubles you, swells or create problems in walking then bring your attention on the knee and start curing it by your own Pranic Shakti. If you know the anatomy of your knee then you can heal it better and faster. It may not be possible to cure your knee in one sitting but

if you do it continuously then you will be astonished to know that your knee is cured completely and does not bother you at all. If your body is hale and hearty then make it more vibrant, energetic and lively with your own healing.

Third Stage (10 minutes): In the third stage, bring back your attention on the third eye and keep sitting in the same posture and breathe normally. Over the years you might have accumulated a lot of nonsense in your head. You need to use your mind and energy to remove this gibberish completely before you direct your pranic energy for your spiritual upliftment. Negative emotions, feelings, sensitivity and memories become a great source of pain and anxiety to all of us. If the mind is cluttered with negativity then it has a tendency to exhaust all its positive energy, therefore you have to get rid of all those negative emotions and feelings which were given to you by other people. At the same time you might have hurt many people in life and which also remain a source of impediment in your spiritual growth. From the core of your being you should bow down within your mind and soul and tell everybody to pardon you of your doings. There is no need to remember the faces and names of people. At the same time you should tell all those people whom you have hurt or tortured by your action, thought, words during your life. Do this exercise with all your sincerity while sitting in the same meditative state.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): These 10 minutes are very, very important. Keep on sitting in the same posture and bring back your attention on the third eye and keep on breathing normally. Before you go deeper into meditation it is very essential for you to know the spiritual and worldly power of your *nakshatra*. As you know Ashwini is governed by the Ashwinis or the twin-horse men. This *nakshatra* is bestowed with Sheeghra Vyapini Shakti. On its basic above, it is capable of healing all the creatures of this world. On its basic below, it controls all the

healing therapies. It is a miraculous *shakti* which is capable of making the world free of diseases.

This *shakti* is so powerful that if you want to send healing energies to others who are suffering then they will also get cured with your *pranic* healing. During these 10 minutes after healing yourself physically, mentally and spiritually, you make your plan of action for the next one day. Whatever you want to do, make a blueprint of that in your mind and plan it with the aid of your *nakshatra shakti.* If you are facing any problem in your projects or in other plans then tell this *shakti* to help you in your future activities. You can make a short or long plan according to the need of the work or project on which you are working. Divide your time and energy in such a way that whatever your targets are, you can fulfill them without any difficulty. When you sit down next day for your *nakshatra* meditation then review the last day's activities. Have you followed your *shakti's* instructions correctly or not? If you made any error then don't repeat it next time.

It is very important to fulfill your essential worldly obligations before you delve into a meditation. The ultimate purpose of this birth is to free yourself from worldly obligation and then know your spiritual being and be one with your god.

You also need to work on negative traits. As you are aware, uncontrollable aggression and impulsiveness are your main drawbacks. At times illusion also colours your vision. During meditation you should overcome your impediments which hamper your spiritual development. Intuitive wisdom can also be sharpened by adopting these *nakshatra* meditation techniques.

Bharani: (13° 20' — 26° 40' Aries)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Bharani is the second *nakshatra* of the zodiac which extends from 13° 20' to 26° 40' degrees and resides in Aries. Both the *nakshatra* Ashwini and Bharani reside completely within the sign Aries ruled by Mars. The lord of Bharani *nakshatra* is

Venus. Mars represents the male energy and Venus denotes the feminine aspect of it. Due to the interaction of feminine and masculine energy, creative potential of existence is felt in this sign. The basic attribute of Bharani *nakshatra* is *rajas* and activities can be seen on primary as well as secondary level. However the tertiary level is governed by *tamas*. The primary motivation of *nakshatra* is Arth directed activity. This *nakshatra* has three hidden meanings. The symbol of *nakshatra* is *yoni* or female reproductive organ. On the second level Shakti Tattva or energy resides here. At the third level the deity of this *nakshatra* is Yama, the god of death. Bharani is made of three faint stars in the sign of Ram.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The word Bharani means she who bears or she who nourishes. The female reproductive organ, *yoni* is also known as *Bhag.* According to Vedic philosophy *yoni* or *bhag* has been given special importance in many Indian rituals. On the surface of it, it may look like a symbol of sensuous pleasure but in the deeper sense it operates on the cosmic principle that transports soul (people) from one shore to another. Another meaning of *bhag* is auspicious which indicates that Bharani is a conduit through which divine energy flows to nourish the manifestation. According to Vedantic philosophy there are two primary forces of manifestation which are Shiva-Tattva and Shakti-Tattva. They are active and passive principles of the universe. Ashwini represents the Shiva energy and Bharani denotes *shakti* (energy). Ashwini is ruled by Ketu and Bharani is governed by Venus. These planets play a very important role to generate evolutionary impulse. Ketu operates at mental level and has the understanding of the world through intuitive wisdom. Therefore Ashwini understands the intricacies of life at only the psychological level, however, Venus operates at the physical level and nothing remains impersonal because without being interpersonal and physical one cannot experience how life manifests on this planet.

Yama, the god of death is the presiding deity of Bharani. The primary job of Yama is to take the departed soul and provide him the kind of support, shelter till this soul starts its new journey. The name of Yama may be creating terror in people's mind but Yama plays a very important role because he cleanses the environment and does not leave the souls wandering unnecessarily till they begin their new manifestation. As a matter of fact, Yama was among one of the ancient ancestors of man.

The other meaning of Yama is widely used in yogic *kriyas* (terms). Under Yama discipline one has to perform many *kriyas* or process to purify the energy channel. The basic conducts of Yama are non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* and leading a life of purity. When a seeker follows these conducts then he directs life-force towards a new birth for the soul. Similarly, when the body becomes weak and cannot carry the burden of soul any longer then Yama, the god of death enables it to detach from the old form to assume the new one. Yama as a deity provides suitable passage for the more efficient flow of life energy.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The first nine *nakshatra*s from Ashwini to Ashlesha come under rajsik impulses. Bharani being the second *nakshatra* represents the same consciousness and works on the evolutionary design of the universe of sensuous experiences. All the *nakshatra*s have fixed temperament. Bharani's temperament is of a man. Man has an inherent conscious desire to experience sensuous pleasures to the optimum. Outcome of sensuous pleasures puts him on the path of his creation and automatically the process of attachment takes place. According to ancient seers the caste of Bharani is Shudra. Shudras were a part of the ancient culture and their job was to serve the other community. In that sense, one of yoni's jobs is to serve mankind by the process of procreation. Species of Bharani *nakshatra* is an elephant which was widely used for the transportation of people and goods. Bharani is the productive

zone of Aries and provides the suitable environment for manifestation. Bharani also supports the ego waiting in a position of readiness to start a new cyclic journey. Venus, the lord of Bharani *nakshatra* initially operates at the sensuous level but the real purpose of Venus is to put the soul on the process of liberation after experiencing the worldly pleasures. Rajsik attributes start playing their role to the optimum from this point onward because activities can be seen at every level.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The lord of Bharani *nakshatra* is Venus and the sign Aries is ruled by Mars. The element of this sign is fire and symbol is a 'Ram'. The Sun remains exalted in this sign.

Bharani, Venus and Mars provide infinite potential; it is capable of creating the necessary environment from where a unique kind of life force starts emerging. This combination also indicates that big dreams or desires can be converted into reality if the concept is clear. Once the seed is sown and is about to germinate, it has the capacity to become a tree, provided it is nourished properly. The mind tends to get automatically focused because you are not deprived of the fruits of labour for long. The taste of initial success paves the way for the long and impossible journey ahead. There is some mysticism involved in the actualization of a dream and once this mysticism overpowers man, then success starts following the person. Their authority, leadership quality and power make them almost invincible.

You are kind and generous. People may take advantage of this; not easily though, since you have a very shrewd mind and quickly grasp what is in the offing. Your own family will get a lot of your attention, but your love and affection remains undemonstrated and this could sometimes be misunderstood. A very hygiene conscious person, you love a neat and clean house. Love for antiques will help you to decorate your house with rare artifacts. You get highly emotional when you get to know of somebody's miseries or pain. People do take advantage

of your sincerity, but it does not bother you at all. You help people to rejuvenate and re-invent themselves and you apply the same formula for yourself as well.

Your Drawbacks: You are extremely sensitive. You do not easily forget the good and bad done to you by anybody. You can go up to any extreme in both the situations. When you are good there is no limit to you goodness, and if you are ruthless, then god bless the others! You are often restless, impatient and uncharitable to those who did not endorse your activities or ideas. Try not to stretch your ideas to an extreme because this can turn out to be your greatest weakness.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BHARANI NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): First of all you need to find an isolated place for yourself where you can sit down peacefully. Make sure this place is free of noise as far as possible and put aside your cell phone, I-pad etc. If you are sitting on the ground spread a blanket or any other support so you can sit on it during *nakshatra* meditation. Sit down in any posture which makes you comfortable for the next 40 minutes. Start your exercise with exhaling first. Begin inhaling deeply and fully. After inhaling hold your breath for a few seconds and put your attention on the Mooladhara, first chakra of Kundlini at the base of spine. During those seconds when you are holding your breath you can recite any small mantra during that phase. Start exhaling gradually and empty your lungs completely of air. When the exhaling is completed hold your breath for the same seconds as you have done after inhaling. You can recite the same mantra during this phase of holding your breath and bring your total attention on the top of your head or Shahastrar (seven *chakras*) or Kundlini Shakti. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Bring back your entire attention on the third eye between the two eyebrows and breathe

normally. There is no need to recite any mantra while focusing on your third eye. During this phase of *nakshatra* meditation you need to heal your body and make it free from pain and aches. Even if your body is hale and hearty, still to make it more vibrant, lively and energetic, you need to pay attention on each and every part of your body. It would be better for you if you have the basic understanding of the anatomy of your body because then you can heal that part of body quickly and completely. In your meditative state you can see the function of your heart, how it is operating and its connection with arteries and veins. Knowing pulsating of the heart can be a great yogic experience. Try some time and see the magic yourself. Stay in this posture for 10 minutes.

Third Stage (10 minutes): In this third stage while sitting in the same posture and breathing normally you need to bring all your attention on your third eye. A great philosopher has said that thought is your enemy. When the negative thoughts clutter the mind then the enmity becomes complete. It is the traffic of thoughts that keeps engaging the mind throughout. Negative thoughts have the tendency to defocus the mind from the real issues and one becomes entangled with that particular thought which is totally exhausting. You need to identify those thoughts during this meditative state and free your mind from them forever. There may be some people, situations or circumstances responsible for that negativity but you need to clear your mind from all that. Imagine those situations in your mind and bow down within yourself and free your mind and spirit forever.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture and breathe normally. Make sure your attention is on the third eye. The presiding deity of Bharani is Yama, the god of death. It is bestowed with a power to take things away (Upbharani Shakti). On its basic above ie, on the heavenly plane is the elimination of life from the body. Its basic below ie, on the wordly plane is taking

the soul to the kingdom of ancestors. The symbol of Bharani is *yoni* (Shakti Tattva). Bharani *nakshatra* has two powerful *shaktis.* Technically the deity of this *nakshatra* is Yama, the god of death. Symbol of this *nakshatra* is *yoni* which is represented by *shakti* energy (Shiva Shakti). *Yama* is directly linked to death which takes away the soul and keeps it within the realm of ancestors. *Yoni* is another symbol which is basically a mother energy which brings the soul on this planet. If you can meditate on *yoni* which is directly linked to the mother, not the pleasure seeking one then you can uplift your soul to a new height. Meditating on your death is also a very powerful and secret meditative technique. Death is inevitable and all the fears of this world are generated out of the fear of death. If you can, meditate on your death or Yama or deity Yama who actually provides shelter and support to your soul till it takes on its new journey.

It is also believed that the entire universe is a womb or *yoni.* All of us come through this womb or universe and go back into the same universe. The Sanskrit word *yon*i has many meanings including the numerous births a soul goes through till it is liberated. The basic drawback of your personality is extreme sensitivity, pride, arrogance and indulgence. You need to work on these drawbacks. Yama, the god of death is a constant reminder to you that this life is very limited. After knowing the ultimate truth it makes no senses to continue with your vices.

Krittika : (26° 40' Aries — 10° 0' Taurus)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Krittika is the third *nakshatra* of the zodiac which extends from 26° 40' minute to 40° 0' and resides in the two constellations of Ram and Bull. The first quarter of *nakshatra* up 30° 0' of the zodiac comes under Aries ruled by Mars while the remaining three quarters fall under the sign Taurus ruled by Venus. The ruling planet of the asterism is the Sun. The deity of *nakshatra* is Agni, the god of fire. The symbol of *nakshatra* is a razor. The attribute of *nakshatra* is *rajas* or activity on both primary and

secondary level and *sattva* at a tertiary level. The primary motivation of asterism is *kama* or desire.

Krittika is made up of six visible brightest stars and the seventh one is invisible. These stars are also known as the constellation of Pleiades. The combination of these seven stars is also known as seven sisters which are believed to be the wives of seven great seers who also figure astronomically as the seven stars of Ursa Major, the Big Dipper. Their connection with the ancient *rishis* shows the importance for the evolution of our planet with their guiding energy.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The ruling deity of Krittika is Agni, the fire god. The importance of fire has been established in all the Vedic literatures. Fire has been used in all its possible forms. The primary source of fire is the Sun. The purest form of fire is the light which is very important for the existence of the world. When this light is converted into lightening, it starts creating many hidden minerals, metals in the deepest layers of the earth. Agni or fire is capable of construction and destruction of anything on this earth. It itself remains imperishable. When it is burning it can consume anything which comes within its range. Fire also operates as a great purificator of this universe. Without fire in the belly the process of digestion cannot take place. When it converts itself into heat it gives warmth, when it maintains temperature then life starts taking shape on this planet. Latent heat is very essential in the process of manifestation of life in the womb or hidden form. In other words fire is the essential part of the life force or the existence. The cessation of fire is also the end of existence. The seven flames of fire provide seven planes of existence to manifest. The fire god is deeply connected with this constellation and operates on atmic principles. Krittika also stands for total transformation of the being.

It is also believed that the seventh or invisible star of the *nakshatra* or seven sisters is married to Dhruv or the Pole star.

The entire globe rotates around the Pole and Krittika provides the guiding force and through its seven fold manifestation life happens on the earth. Therefore the connectivity between Krittika and the Pole star establishes the importance of a central and hidden principle from which the laws of life establish themselves.

There is a beautiful story connected with the birth of Kartikeya with Krittika *nakshatra*. During the ancient times the demons under the leadership of Taraka (demon) were becoming very powerful and started destroying the world and creating an imbalance throughout the universe. Existing gods could not take on the mighty Taraka. To destroy him and the entire clan of demons, the gods obtained the semen of Lord Shiva. After obtaining the semen there was a big problem on how to preserve it for desired results. The seed of Shiva had such a fiery quality that no ordinary womb could hold it. Thus the seed was to be cast in fire and be protected by water. Therefore Krittikas were approached to nourish the seed in their womb. The elder son of Shiva, Kartikeya was born out of the seed and on the seventh day after his birth, destroyed the demon Taraka and freed the gods from this demon.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

First nine constellations of the zodiac fall under the general category of *rajas* attribute. It should be kept in mind as a general principle that manifestation cannot take place with only one *guna*. Other two *gunas* should also be operating at a subtle level. On the primary and secondary level the attribute of this *nakshatra* is *rajas* but on the tertiary level it has *sattva* attribute. If we analyze the birth story of Kartikeya then we can understand it more clearly that on the physical level *rajas gunas* were in operation because without activity or necessary action, the birth of Kartikeya could not take place. But the hidden desire behind it was *sattva*, to free the gods from the demons.

The symbol of Krittika *nakshatra* is a razor which has multi-functions. Razor in the hands of a surgeon could be the

source of reestablishing life in the subject after removing the malignant organs. However if the razor is given in the hands of a monkey then disaster is evident. This asterism has both the qualities of construction and destruction. The presiding deity of the asterism is fire which also suggests the same. The primary motivation of this asterism is *kama* or desire. Out of four stages of life manifestation *kama* plays a very important role. Without the support of *kama* any kind of creation is not possible therefore *kama* is the basic necessity of manifestation. If it is used discreetly then it manifests itself in the form of ultimate beauty of creation. However, if it is used wrongly then destruction is inevitable.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: Krittika-Sun-Mars provide a deep-rooted confidence and firmness of character to achieve greatness. Invariably, a person from this constellation fights for a social cause and could easily be termed as a spiritual warrior. The person has an inherent search for truth and possesses an inner fire which starts burning for literal transformation. The negative side of this *nakshatra* could be a stubborn and aggressive attitude. Sometimes, a destructive tendency is also manifested and if this happens, then the consequences could be quite shocking.

Krittika, Sun and Venus suggest a nervous energy, extremely keen to express itself and experience a fresh manifestation. People born with this combination invariably direct their passion towards their goal and their pursuit remains unemotional till the desired results are obtained. Your basic impulse is to strive for creativity which you strongly believe you possess. It takes quite a while before you can prove your worth to yourself as well as to the world. Being practical and disciplined, you channellize your energy in a particular direction with certain objectives in mind. You neither remain in a state of euphoria nor anticipate results till they start happening in reality. You are not sceptical

of your success since you have worked very hard from the beginning, but you enjoy living with hope. This attitude helps you achieve your goal and emerge as a winner.

You are blessed with constructive as well as destructive energy. Essentially, you believe that creating something different is more valuable than taking the wrong side. The constructive aspect of life is so deep in you that you literally devote yourself to social causes. You cannot remain selfish for a long time because whatever you experience after putting in tremendous efforts, you are always willing to pass it on to others. As you are aware of your potential, you work on it and bring it to a higher level. There is an inherent desire to help others who find difficulty in organizing themselves and in staying focused. You are blessed with the sharpness of a doctor's scalpel who uses this knife for the benefit of mankind. The influence of your *nakshatra,* Krittika, is so huge that a divine quality automatically builds within you. It is reflected in your selflessness as the basic nature of divinity is impersonal.

You are extremely missionary in your approach, right from the beginning. You operate with a single objective in mind and make sure you achieve it with dignity. You organize and channellize your energy in such a way that it starts giving maximum results. Perhaps, by being methodical and disciplined, you can do wonders with your thought process. You are a practical person and prefer helping people rather than forcing them to do something. It does not matter whether they are related to you or not, but they should be genuine seekers and you will help them to the best of your abilities. Once you are convinced of their credibility you can go to any extent to help them. Your magnanimity does not know limits as you do not expect anything in return.

Your Drawbacks: The destructive side of your personality can also be a force to reckon with if it ever takes root. On the rampage to destruction, you can, to a great extent, even

destroy the possibility of revolutionary forces. It has the capability of affecting not only an individual but also a community. You need to understand this destructive force of your which is equally powerful.

Suspicion and jealousy are two areas which can wreak havoc with your personality. Once you are on the warpath with your negative thought process you can easily head towards destruction. At times, lust also plays a negative role. Therefore, these traits should be checked well in time lest they contribute to your downfall.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR KRITTIKA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Spare 40 minutes to yourself everyday. Make sure, you are cut off from the world totally. During these 10 minutes find a comfortable and isolated place for yourself and sit down in a posture where your spine and neck are erect. In such a posture the flow of energy becomes rhythmical throughout all the *chakras*. Start your exercise with exhaling. It is also very important that the breathing process should begin with exhaling first. Now gradually start inhaling and fill your belly with maximum air which you can inhale easily. When the inhaling completes hold your breath as long as you can do it. During this time while holding your breath you can count 1, 2, 3.... or recite any short mantra.

During the period of counting or chanting the mantra bring all your attention on the base of your spine or Mooladhara Chakra. After counting or reciting a mantra, start exhaling and empty your lungs completely. Again at this stage hold your breath and repeat the mantra or counting and bring your attention on the top of head or Sahasrar Chakra. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes. You are not supposed to count or recite mantra while inhaling or exhaling. It is also essential to remember that breathing should be rhythmic, systematic, without jerks and complete. No need to put extra pressure while inhaling or exhaling. After doing this exercise for 10 minutes

bring back your attention on the third eye, between the eyebrows and breathe normally. Stop counting or reciting the mantra and ready yourself for the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During these 10 minutes focus your attention on the third eye and keep breathing normally. While sitting in the posture watch your body internally from head to toe gradually. Your eyes should remain closed during the entire *nakshatra* meditation. Begin with watching each and every part of your body first externally then internally. For example, when you are watching your head then start from the tip of your hair and feel the root of hair and your entire skull, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, ear, nose, lips, chin, externally as well as internally and do the same exercise till you reach your toes. Watching and healing each and every part of your body can be done simultaneously. If you want to do this exercise separately ie, first watching then healing that is also possible. If any part of your body is a source of pain, trouble or anxiety heal it more with your *pranic shakti* or healing. Healing is a natural process but when mind-brain principle work on that diseased or troubled area then healing process intensifies. If you do it regularly then you will see amazing results.

Third Stage (10 minutes): While sitting in the same posture bring your attention on the third eye and keep breathing normally. There are many situations or incidents which keep on surfacing on the subconscious mind from time to time. For instance, it is very difficult to forget humiliation or defeat if it has happened sometime in life. At the same time there are many issues which one wants to address sometime in life at any cost. Not very often but occasions happen in life which keep on polluting the mind and man wants to take revenge at any cost. These negative thoughts invoke the mind so strongly that mind becomes hapless and these sorts of thoughts keep on deviating the mind from the real target of life. While sitting in this posture

ponder on all those thoughts if they keep surfacing in your mind and see the validity of these thoughts by using your intelligence and discarding them one after another. One needs to bring mind and attention at a spontaneous level so as and when a situation demands, a person can respond, not react blindly. Train your mind to be spontaneous rather than following the past or wandering in the future.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Now you are at the fourth stage of your *nakshatra* meditation. The deity of your *nakshatra* is Agni, the god of fire which is bestowed with the power of burning known as Dahan Shakti. On the heavenly plane it represents heat and on the worldly plane it represents light.

The inherent power of this *shakti* is purification. While sitting in the same posture and breathing normally, focus all your attention on the third eye and imagine a spiritual lamp is burning in front of you or right in the middle of your eyebrows. This is a sacred *jyoti* (fire) which is capable of destroying all your negativity and purifying it completely. According to your *nakshatra* you can be destructive also. This is the basic drawback of your personality which keeps on hampering progress in the material as well as spiritual world. If you pray to this *shakti* or god of fire then whatever negativity you have will be cut through with razor-like precision and will be eliminated. If you continue this process then your spiritual journey will begin quietly and one day you will be amazed to know the changes in your mind, body and soul.

Rohini : (10° 0' — 23° 20' Taurus)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Rohini is the fourth constellation of the zodiac which extends 40° 0' to 53° 20' of the zodiac. The entire asterism resides in Taurus, the Bull. Five stars of the constellation make Rohini most beautiful in the sky, including the bright red giant Aldebaran Alpha Taurus. Rohini is ruled by the Moon whereas

the sign Taurus is governed by Venus which represents the creativity of the entire cosmos. The symbol of this *nakshatra* is a chariot that transports royalty from one destination to another. The primary motivation of Rohini is *moksha* ie, liberation. Its basic attribute is *rajas*, *tamas* at secondary and *rajas* at the tertiary level. The presiding deity of the constellation is Brahma or Prajapati, the creator of the universe who works on a cosmic design given to him by superior gods.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

We find many reference points of Rohini in various ancient literatures. According to Atharva Ved, Rohini was the consort of Rohit, the reddish Sun. It has been mentioned in ancient literature that out of the relationship between Rohini and Rohit, the heaven and earth were produced. Rohit was a powerful deity who also made the earth and heaven strong. It is also believed that he established light in the heaven. He had the ability to measure the space and atmosphere and through his grace gods attained immorality. His colour is bright red and deeply connected with the Sun. He is responsible for the very life force which gives shape to the entire manifestation. This shows that Rohini has huge creative energy which is totally dedicated to total creativity. Rohini is a centre of feminine energy which attracts male energy towards her for the purpose of procreation. It is also believed that through this constellation the fruit of ones actions are also realized.

Rohini was the foster mother of Balrama, the elder brother of Lord Krishna. The story unfolds like this: Devki was the mother of Balrama and his father was Vasudev. Balrama was the seventh son of Devki and Vasudev. Devki and Vasudev were imprisoned by the demon king Kansa. Before the birth of Balrama, the foetus was transferred into Rohini's womb who saved him from the rage of Kansa who wanted to kill all the children of Devki. Balrama was looked after by the motherly affection of Rohini until his identity was finally revealed along

with Krishna in the house of Yashoda and Nanda, Krishna's foster parents. Being a foster mother of Balrama, Rohini enjoyed a special status. Without her unconditional support the divine consciousness would have not dawned upon the earth. It is also believed that Krishna was born under this *nakshatra* and his Moon and ascendant was Taurus.

There is another *puranic* story connected with Rohini and Moon. Out of 10 Prajapatis Daksha was the one. The king Daksha fathered 60 daughters out of which 27 were wedded to the Moon. Rohini was the most beautiful and sensuous among all her sisters. The Moon was hugely attracted towards her and started living with her only and ignored his all other wives. The other sisters of Rohini did not like the hostile attitude of the Moon and became very jealous and angry. They all approached Prajapati who in turn cursed the Moon and he started becoming ill (black). After seeing the precarious condition of the Moon all the sisters felt very bad and approached the father once again to pardon the Moon. Once the curse was cast it could not be taken back therefore some amendments were made and from that day onward Moon started waxing and waning in the sky.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The basic attribute of this asterism is *rajas* and at secondary level it is *tamas* but again at tertiary level is *rajas*. The motivational force of this *nakshatra* is *moksha*, ie, liberation. *Gunas* operate at three levels. The best combination would be when it consists of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. But in this present case *sattva* is missing entirely which is understandable because in the first group of nine *nakshatras* and four signs the predominating *guna* is *rajas* only. The basic attribute of this asterism is *rajas*, which means activity as well as serious involvement. On the secondary level it is *tamas*, dullness, negativity, inertia etc. On the tertiary level asterism again rises to its *rajas* level. This we can see in the case of the Moon. Moon starts a journey at *rajas* level, gets totally infatuated by Rohini

and too much indulgence begins. As the consequence of over intoxicated behaviour, he lands himself in all kind of trouble. By the interference of his wives, mercy was given to him by Prajapati and peace and system was restored. If we analyze the life of Balrama then it is not very far away from the story of the Moon. Balrama was an over indulgent person who was more committed to worldly pleasures than spiritual development. These attributes come to him due to the initial support of Rohini who inculcated these basic traits of her into his foster son Balrama. Due to Balrama's overindulgence in sensuous pleasure he would overlook the divine plan of Krishna. Since these attributes are more in evidence at the secondary level or *tamas*, as soon as realization dawns upon the person he moves back on the *rajas* level without wasting much time.

The motivational force of this asterism is *moksha* or liberation therefore Balrama very quickly made amendments in his nature and the cosmic awareness of Krishna lifts him to another plane.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: Rohini-Moon-Venus all three are associated with huge reserves of creative power. The Moon-Venus combination is one of the best poetic combinations from where the poetry of life starts taking new shape. This is a unique configuration which creates most suitable conditions from where the fruit of ones efforts starts ripening. It does not take very long for people belonging to this combination to connect with the world. Rohini functions at a universal conscious level which is beyond all rationality and reasoning. The transcendental consciousness also starts flowing through Rohini for world manifestation. It is noted that Lord Krishna was born when the Moon and its ascendant were in Rohini.

You have tremendous confidence in your potential. You work religiously to create an environment from where you can gain strength. There is a strong belief deep inside you that your efforts

will bear fruit. This belief helps you set very high standards and prove your worth. An element of divinity is rooted in your psyche which helps you to achieve a higher awareness of your being; this inspires you to help humanity at large.

Your Drawbacks: You need not get too indulgent with your possessions as well as pleasures. A deeper involvement in sexual relationships can lead you to cross all social limits. Getting intoxicated with your success and the use of chemical substances can lead to your downfall.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ROHINI NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down at a secluded place. If you are comfortable sitting on the ground that is the best otherwise you can sit on a couch or any chair where you feel comfortable. It will help you more if you sit in the same place everyday. Over a period of time you can energize that place which will help you to get more easily into *nakshatra* meditation state.

After sitting in a posture start your exercise by exhaling. After exhaling inhale slowly and deeply. When you exhale fully then hold your breath for a while, put your attention on the Mooladhara Chakra, the first chakra at the base of spine and recite any short mantra while holding the breath. After doing this exercise start exhaling and empty your lungs completely. Hold your breath as long as you can do easily and bring your attention on the top of your head, Sahastar Chakra and do the same mantra. Repeat this exercise for 10 minutes. Gradually you will find, after holding the breath, when you are releasing the breath then it rushes to the other end to be one with another centre of your body. After holding the breath at that centre start inhaling and you will again notice that breath is rushing back again to be with another centre of your body. Within 10 minutes you will become one with your breath and feel absolutely relaxed at mind, body and soul level. After doing this exercise for 10 minutes start breathing normally and stop reciting mantra

and slowly bring your entire attention on the third eye which is located between the two eyebrows.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Sit in the same posture with your eyes closed and breathe normally with your attention on the third eye. Start watching your body mentally from top to bottom. Do this exercise very slowly and observe each and every part of your body externally as well as internally. Start watching your head from the outer skull and gradually go inside your brain and see what it is made up of. If you do not know much about your brain try to learn about it from any elementary science book. It will be very fascinating to know your mind. As you are aware, your mind-brain is controlling each and every physical function of the body. Without your knowing it, every part of the body is functioning in the perfect possible way. If there is a little pain in any part of the body, a message directly reaches to the mind-brain and you know where the problem lies. Try to understand each and every, big and small organ of your body internally and see how beautifully this organism can be maintained or managed. With your pranic energy start healing each and every part of your body systematically. If any part of your body is giving you any trouble then try to know the science of that part and start healing it more during your *nakshatra* meditation. If you do this exercise continuously for few days then you will see the changes yourself.

Third Stage (10 minutes): In the first two exercises of 10 minutes you have cleansed your body through breathing exercises and made it toxin free to an extent. Through your pranic healing you have made it more lively and vibrant at physical level. During these 10 minutes you need to purify your mind from all past hassles and future inhibitions. You are already sitting in a posture and your eyes are closed. You need to breathe normally without putting any pressure on your breath. Put your attention on your third eye and try to heal your mind from past emotions, feelings,

hurt, problems, difficulties which you might have faced some time in life. If anything still bothers you then try to erase it from your mind forever. Your mind is also like a computer which needs to delete those files which have lost their reference point. Sometimes it is very difficult to forget past events or happenings because they become a part of our present life. Most of these events are painful. They can induce pain just with the thought of those events. Even if the past was great that serves no purpose but the mind has a tendency to go back and imprison itself. It is your duty to free your mind with the aid of *nakshatra* meditation of all those past events whether good or bad and connect yourself with the present. All apprehension regarding future should be discarded from their root. Continue sitting in the same posture and be ready for the next stage.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture and breath normally. Your eyes are closed and your attention is on the third eye. Rohini is ruled by Brahma, the creator of this universe and its *shakti* (power) is Rohan Shakti. On the heavenly plane it plants and on the worldly plane its waters are devoted to creation. While sitting in the same posture you can imagine the power of creator which is responsible for all kind of creation. If you need a figure then you can fix your attention on the figure of Brahma between your two eyebrows. To begin with you can widen your imagination throughout the universe and see how the creation of this world has taken place. In the beginning you could be wild in your imagination but gradually come back to yourself. You and Brahma are not two different entities although that is what seems to all of us. It is said in the Vedas — Yat Brahamande tat Pinde. Loosely interpreted, universe and us are just one. If you create that situation then you can free yourself just now. According to your *nakshatra* your drawbacks are overindulgence and intoxicating your mind with any object which you possess. Work on it and you will be free from these negative traits very soon.

The fourth stage of *nakshatra* meditation can also be utilized for your immediate future planning. Just make the road map of next one day that you need to do. Plan your movement sitting in the same posture systematically then execute it in the next 24 hours. When you sit for you *nakshatra* meditation next day look back and see if you have followed your *nakshatra* meditation plan in the last 24 hours. If you made any mistake do not repeat it and gradually you will find that your inner power or *shakti* is guiding your mind, body and soul very systematically.

Mrigashira : (23° 20' Taurus — 6° 40' Gemini)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Mrigashira is the fifth *nakshatra* of the zodiac which can be found within the constellation of Taurus and Gemini which extends from 53° 20' to 66° 40' of the zodiac. The *nakshatra* consists of three stars of the head of Orion. The asterism stands for searching star and establishing new relationships. The first half of *nakshatra* is ruled by Venus and the second half of *nakshatra* is governed by Mercury. The mansion itself is ruled by dynamic planet Mars. Its basic attribute is *rajas*, action and secondary and tertiary level it is *tamas*. The deity of Mrigashira is Som (Moon god) who imparts divinity and enlightenment with the help of mystic nectar. The primary motivation of Mrigashira is *moksha*,ie, liberation.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The literal meaning of Mrigashira is Antelope's head. Mriga means the Antelope and Shira stands for head. The other meaning of Mrigashira is to strive, seek and search which could be aimed materialistically or spiritually. Mrigashira also means starting of a new journey or manifestation. Lord Krishna is also associated with this *nakshatra* when he said in Bhagavad Gita that among the months I am the Margashirsha. The present Dark Age or Kaliyug began with the vernal equinox in

Mrigashira. It is also mentioned in many occult sciences that shift of earth from North Pole to South Pole or vice versa brings radical zoological changes and new evolutionary impulses take place. It is also believed that the last global phenomenon which is connected with present age or yug happens in Mrigashira. Lord Krishna also says in the Bhagavad Gita that the beginning and end of this universe happens due to my presence but I remain the non-involved one. Perhaps he was referring to this phenomenon.

Many auspicious stories are associated with this asterism. It has been mentioned in Shiva Purana that Uma, the consort of Shiva was born in this *nakshatra* and later on Shiva and Uma got married in this *nakshatra*. The lord of Mrigashira *nakshatra* is the Moon god, Som who represents nectar that was distributed among the people who performed *puja*, prayer, yagya and meditation.

There is another interesting story regarding Moon. Moon was infatuated by the sensuous beauty of Tara, the wife of Jupiter (Brahaspati). Moon seduced her with his charm and both of them eloped and start living together. After knowing the reality of Moon, Jupiter started searching for him all over the place. At last he found both of them and wanted his wife Tara back with him. Som was not interested to return her and Tara was also reluctant. Many gods intervened in this matter and Moon was told to do the rightful deed. There was a problem also involved with the whole episode. Tara was pregnant with Moon's son called Mercury or Buddha. In the beginning Brahaspati was not interested to adopt the illegitimate son of Moon but after finding him extraordinarily intelligent he accepted Mercury as his foster son. If Moon was related with the perception of this universal mind then Mercury represents analytical sight of it. This story is a beginning of a new family of the cosmos. Mrigashira indicates turmoil in the beginning but the end result is always auspicious.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The basic attribute of this *nakshatra* is *rajas* ie, action or activity, however at secondary and tertiary level it is *tamas* or inertia. The primary motivation of the asterism is *moksha* or liberation. The symbol of *nakshatra* is female serpent which indicates over possessiveness as well as hidden power. The basic attribute *rajas* indicates that action is the primary force which is governed by impulses. When impulses are very strong it is difficult to cope with them and one cannot anticipate consequences. Whenever desire, greed, passion and ego take a centre stage then it leads to turmoil automatically. On the secondary and tertiary level it is full of *tamas* or inertia. If we try to analyze the story of Moon and Tara then we notice that initially they were governed by desire, greed and ego and lent themselves to the state of dullness, inertia or negativity. The motivational force of this *nakshatra* is *moksh*, ie, liberation. The purpose of all *rajas* activities is to get liberated itself from the whole process of activities. But it cannot happen unless and until one goes through fall of *tamas* and then rises from there. Since the motivational force of *nakshatra* is *moksh* therefore everything falls in place and new journey or life takes place.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Mrigashira-Mars-Venus combination provides an environment from where growth can take place both inwardly and outwardly. There is a great urge to penetrate the realm of materialism and evaluate its pros and cons according to ones own understanding. It is very important to understand as well as investigate the worldly impact of possessions on the life of an individual. For the people born under this *nakshatra*, there is a tendency towards possessiveness. However, you feel a deeper urge to get out of this worldliness and understand the total phenomenon as a mirage; you soon get dissatisfied and look for inner consolation. Illusions and confusions clear with the passage of time.

Mirgashira-Mars-Mercury prompts an individual to discriminate his thought process and come out with a clear cut picture of his future plans. The person is overcharged with futuristic thoughts and puts in all his energy without weighing the real worth of his thoughts. Mars-Mercury combination helps him to overcome his flaws. Mrigashira blesses him with positive energy so that the mission is accomplished.

You are blessed with tremendous energy and it takes you a while to channellize this reservoir. You are absolutely focused and work towards creativity. You understand that your perceptions have the potential to create a new world on their own. Once your thought process is clear to you then you put in all your efforts to achieve your goals. Primarily, you believe in yourself which is why you concentrate on your priorities and you hesitate to take support from others because deep down you know that you have the ability and potential to achieve your targets. The moment you conquer the heights, you are willing to provide total support to anyone else who wishes to do so.

There is a tremendous urge in you to always experience something new in life. There is an inherent dissatisfaction with your existence and disorientation is created by devastating events. Therefore, your entire energy works for corrective measures vis-à-vis different situations or events. You understand intuitively that a meaningful life can only be achieved by going through the process of duality. Once you find a path for yourself, you want to help those who matter to you.

Your Drawbacks: On the negative side of your personality is overindulgence in pleasures. If you are on this path, then your craving and need for seeking more comforts and pleasure could lead you towards a chaotic life. Sensory attachments become so deep that they also create a big problem for you.

You are over-sensitive and touchy about small issues and make a mountain out of a molehill. Sometimes, your fickle nature can also create serious problems. Seeking pleasure is like a mirage

for you; you are not satisfied with what you get and it remains a chase. Craving for materialism can have a negative impact.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MRIGASHIRA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Find a peaceful place for yourself because you have to sit down everyday for 40 minutes and practice *nakshatra* meditation.

The first stage is of 10 minutes. Sit down in a posture which makes you very comfortable and keep your spine and neck erect. Always start your exercise with exhaling. When you lungs are emptied then start inhaling, fill them with maximum breath and after inhaling is complete then hold the breath for few seconds and put your attention on the base of spine — Mooladhara (Kundalini Chakra). You can start counting 1, 2, 3 ...... or recite any small mantra. If you like you can recite Om. This mantra should be recited mentally, not orally. Gradually start exhaling and empty your lungs completely. When exhaling is complete hold your breath and bring your attention on the top of head, Shahastrar (Crown Chakra) and recite the same mantra, say Om.

Do this exercise for the next 10 minutes. You will notice that you are cut off from the world, your mind is cool and thoughts don't run in all directions aimlessly. This breathing exercise will connect you deeply with your body and mind.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During the second stage keep sitting in the same posture and now start breathing normally. Make sure your eyes are closed during the entire *nakshatra* meditation technique. Bring your attention on your third eye, between the two eyebrows while sitting in the same posture. These 10 minutes you need to invest on each and every part of your body. As you know this body is a vehicle and always ready to serve you to the best of its ability. Start watching your body from head to toe. First you observe your body from outside meaning watching your head, forehead, nose, eyes, skin and likewise

other parts of the body and bring your attention on your feet. Now start watching your body from feet to head gradually but internally. You can notice the shape of your feet and its inner connection then you can see your legs, thighs, torso and other parts of the body till you reach your head. Human body is a unique and mysterious also. While watching your body from top to bottom keep on healing your body simultaneously with your healing energy. If you have any chronic illness then heal it more with your tenderness. If you do this practice for few days you will be surprised to know that your body has actually started healing. You can rejuvenate your entire body with this practice.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture and breathe normally. With your eyes shut bring your attention on the third eye. During these 10 minutes you need to heal yourself from those emotions, feelings, hurt, agony, miseries which keep on troubling you off and on. We all face good and bad situations. Some situations are such they become a part of our memory forever. These situations or incidents could be of either nature. If you had a great time in the past and now the situations turns adverse then the past becomes a source of pain. In the same way some unpleasant memories of the past never leave you because you want to react sometime in future. This sort of idea also engages the mind negatively. You need to free your mind from all kind of situations and connect it with your present. When mind is not fully connected with the present then its capacity also reduces drastically which reflects in the result. Therefore it is important to free the mind from all burdens so you can use it fully for your future activities.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): During these last 10 minutes keep on sitting in the same posture and bring back your attention on the third eye. Your eyes are closed and you are breathing normally. The presiding deity of this *nakshatra* is Som, the god of the Moon or immortal nectar. Its *shakti* is *prinana*, the power

of giving fulfillment. On its heavenly plane it is extension, and on the worldly plane, it is weaving (making cloth). Overall it gives complete enjoyment. If you pray to Som or Moon then most of your desires are likely to be fulfilled. While sitting in the same posture bring the image of Moon near your third eye and use your imagination to enlarge it and make the whole world a Moon. Every activity of the cosmos is happening only in that Moon which you are imagining. Gradually you will find yourself in a different world and this *shakti* will open its secrets to you. While doing this *nakshatra* meditation, see which are your drawbacks and try to remove them from your system. Overindulgence is one of the biggest traits of your being which needs to be understood and discarded from the system.

Since this *shakti* is capable of giving you anything on this earth including liberation, you decide what you want from it.

Ardra : (6° 40' — 20° 0' Gemini)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Ardra is the sixth *nakshatra* of the zodiac and it consists of a star, the bright star Betelgeuse, in the constellation of Orion. Ardra extends from 66° 40' to 80° 0' of the zodiac. The entire asterism is within the sign of Gemini ruled by Mercury. The symbol of the asterism is human head where mind presides and all thinking takes place. This symbol also looks like a precious gem. Its deity is Rudra, the lord of destruction and its planetary ruler is Rahu, also known as North Node of the Moon. *Kama* or desire is the primary motivation of the asterism. Its basic attribute is *rajas*, action, *tamas* at the secondary and *sattva* at the tertiary level. The Sanskrit meaning of Ardra is wet, soft, fresh, green, moist, shining like a gem.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Ardra is also a name of the demon Taraka whose reference comes in the Krittika asterism. If we follow the story of Taraka then we can understand the spiritual side of Ardra asterism. The

demon Taraka was a great devotee of Brahma whom he pleased after leading a life of austerity for many years. When Brahma asked him for a boon then he did not want to be immortal but was very keen to be extremely powerful and not easily destroyed. That is why he asked Brahma that he should be killed by only a seven-day-old child which seemed impossible. After receiving the boon from Brahma he became destructive himself and started torturing and killing gods.

Ardra represents the human head, which is endowed with the capability to think Primarily mind operates on duality. On one level it is very obedient, systematic, organized and used his intelligence very discreetly to make it extremely powerful or potent. When the mind is on its righteous side then all kinds of construction and creativity take place. However, when it becomes self-righteous and governed by the ego and acts on impulse then it brings down its own destruction. Ardra also stands for freshness, newness and believes in direct perception of reality. Taraka's story indicates how the mind operates when it is not centered, how it oscillate.

Ardra also derives its huge strength from its presiding deity god Rudra. Rudras are hugely powerful and are the energy centre of Lord Shiva. Human head is related to Ardra and has many more hidden meanings in it. It is also believed that the brain is formed according to the past karmas of the man and whatever he does in this birth his future is decided accordingly. That is why the possibility of man doing good or bad is unlimited. When he is on the constructive path then he can build empires and liberate himself forever and if he follows destructive ways then he is capable of destroying everything including himself. Hence meditation or yogic way of life is important to understand this jewel — mind.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The basic attribute of Ardra is *Rajas*, action with *tamas* at secondary and *sattva* at the tertiary level. As we know there are

three *gunas* and their natural series is *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. However, in this *nakshatra* the sequence is topsy-turvy. At the first level it is *rajas* which means activity which is the outcome of huge desire or passion. If we see in the story of Taraka, he was passionately devoted to Brahma whom he pleases by following severe austerity and expressed sincerity. After receiving the boon *tamas* attribute takes over and the real monster which was hidden during worshipping comes out automatically. On the third level it is of *sattva* attribute which means he was liberated after Kartikeya, the son of Shiva kills him after seven days of his birth. If we analyze, the primary motivation of the asterism is *kama* or desire which also forced him to take this path and get liberated. Perhaps he did not know any other path and the force of *gunas* were so compelling which indicates that no other path was available to him. May be he was destined that way.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: Ardra-Rahu-Mercury's basic inspiration is of *kama*: intense passion or desire. Ardra also stands for freshness and delicacy, and it provides a gem-like shine to the entire personality. Ardra also represents the huge reserves of the mind which are capable of converting clear plans into action. There is a tremendous enthusiasm, action-orientation and inherent urge for expression. However, there is a danger of crossing the line and missing your power.

For you, self-identification is very important. Though, in the beginning, your energy is totally focused to give meaning to yourself, you also understand the mysteries of this world to a great extent. Your intuitive wisdom works towards demystifying the whole process. Intelligence is used to understand the mechanism of materialism and decode it. You do not seek help from outside, but are willing to extend a helping hand to those with whom you feel connected. Although you are very kind, a snobbish attitude remains a part of your persona in some form or the other.

Your Drawbacks: There are chances of your getting intoxicated with power and facing constant ups and downs in life. Abuse of power and too much attachment to materialism can cause a lot of problems. Sometimes your actions can cause a lot of pain to others. You can be quite volatile and egoistic which can complicate things in your life.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ARDRA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down comfortably in your house wherever you are peaceful. Find a suitable posture for yourself and sit in that state for the next 40 minutes. Keep your spine and neck erect. Start exercise by exhaling, emptying your lungs and now inhale slowly and completely. When you have inhaled, hold your breath for few seconds and recite any small mantra. If you do not have any mantra then you can recite Om mentally while you are holding your breath. During this time concentrate yourself on the Mooladhara Chakra. After holding your breath for a while start exhaling slowly, gradually and rhythmically. When you have exhaled completely then put your attention on the top of your head or Crown Chakra and hold your breath for the same number of seconds as you have done earlier. While you are holding your breath recite Om again. Repeat this exercise for 10 minutes. There is no need to do any mantra or recitation when you are inhaling or exhaling. You will find your body relaxed and you are calmer and contented with yourself. Now start breathing normally and bring your attention on the third eye and keep sitting in the same posture.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During these 10 minutes you need to know each and every part and function of your body, externally as well as internally. If you can understand the anatomy of your body then it will help you much more. You are already sitting in a posture and your eyes are closed and your attention is on the third eye, ie, between the two eyebrows. Start watching your body from head to toe. You can start this

watching exercise with the outer part of the skull then go inside and observe the structure of your brain and its functions. Primarily brain is divided into two parts and scientists say that the left part of the brain controls the entire right part of the body. The right side of the brain controls the functions of the left part of the body. Neuroscientists say that right part of the brain controls our thinking and emotions and left part of brain controls our action and activities. The same way each and every organ of our body has a very definite role to play. Try to know the mind of your body because scientists believe that body also has its own mind. Watch each and every part of the body from top to bottom and at the same time energize and heal it by your pranic energy. If any part of your body is a constant source of pain and anxiety then heal it more. Within no time you will see that your body is more lively, vibrant, energetic and without pain.

Third Stage (10 minutes): These 10 minutes are very important. You are already in the same posture and breathing normally. Bring your attention on your third eye and make sure your eyes are closed through the *nakshatra* meditation technique. There are many unresolved issues of the past, they keep on troubling the mind from time to time. Some of the issues bother the mind in the present because they were not addressed when they had risen. As it is the human mind keeps on oscillating from the past to the future and seldom wants to be in present. When everything is happening now and here and if the mind is not present then it has to suffer the consequences of the cause and effect. If you think there are any issues or bad memories, hurt, humiliation and any other unresolved matter then free your mind from all this during *nakshatra* meditation. There are many occasions and situations in life when we are helpless and cannot do anything about it. If you understand your helplessness which happened sometime in the past then you can free your mind easily. If you find it still difficult to do it then surrender to the

cosmos and it will free you from your past issues. It is very important to do so because without getting rid of the past you cannot make a real spiritual journey.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture and breathe normally. Your eyes should remain closed. Bring back your attention on your third eye, ie, between the two eyebrows. Your *nakshatra* Ardra is ruled by Rudra, the fierce form of Lord Shiva who represents thunder. This power is known as effort, Yatna Shakti which indicates making gains in life. On the heavenly plane it is hunting or searching. On the worldly plane it is trying to reach the goal.

You are sitting in the same posture and your focus is on the third eye. Start imagining the *roudra roop* (fierce form) or Tandava (dynamic dance) form of Lord Shiva. When Lord Shiva got into a real temper then he produced rudras, the fierce forms of himself and when Lord Shiva is struck by uncontrollable temper then he gets into mode of Tandava. Start imagining Lord Shiva in the state of Tandava and after sometime you will find Shiva is getting into his natural meditative form. Peace and bliss are emanating from him. He is an embodiment of compassion. Once you repeat this *nakshatra* meditation daily you start connecting with your inner self and a new spiritual journey will begin.

While doing this *nakshatra* meditation you need to overcome your negativities like pride, ego and sensory attachments.

Punarvasu : (20° 0' Gemini — 3° 20' Cancer)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Punavasu is the seventh asterism of the zodiac. Punarvasu extends from 80° 0' to 93° 20' of the zodiac. The three quarters of this auspicious *nakshatra* resides in Gemini and the last quarter is placed in Cancer. It consists of five stars including both Castor and Pollux. This *nakshatra* is given a symbol of house

as well as bow. The *nakshatra* itself is ruled by Jupiter. The first three quarters of the *nakshatra* which falls within Gemini is ruled by Mercury and the last quarter which comes under Cancer is ruled by Moon. The presiding deity of the asterism is Goddess Aditi. This *nakshatra* is full of *rajas* attribute or activities, both at primary and tertiary level with *sattva* at secondary level. The primary motivation of Punarvasu is Earth or directed activities.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Punarvasu, the word is consists of two words — Punah and Vasu. Punah means repetition. Vasu means a ray of light or a jewel. The Vasus were dignified Vedic deities, eight in number and all are connected indirectly with this *nakshatra*. If we try to analyze the word Punarvasu then simple meaning comes to mind: repetition of rays. Rays are generated from light and the mystery of the word is if ray keeps on repeating itself then it will automatically take the form of light. The asterism itself represents universal life which can happen only with the support of ray or light. The *nakshatra* also implies the revival of certain aspects of initial life essence which was necessary for the evolutionary process.

Vasus are the very important deities of the universe. At the beginning of cosmic evolution they played a very essential role. The Vasus which are eight in number namely Apas (water), Prithvi (earth), Agni (fire), Chandra (moon), Pratyush (dawn), Dhruva (Pole star), Vayu (air) and Prabhas (lustre) are very important elements for the preservation, nourishment, sustainability of the human and universal existence. Consciousness itself is energized by the Solar Logos. Aditi, the mother goddess creates the possible environment for the seed to eventually bear fruit. She is also bestowed with a great ability to gain wealth or substance. Aditi is also the Earth goddess capable of granting everything in plenty and gives birth to all the gods.

The asterism has two symbols, one is bow and another is house. The bow is the link between the archer and the target. In

a way it operates as a launching pad. The archer is standing here but through aim wants to be somewhere else. Another symbol of the asterism is house which also implies the same meaning. The house is used by an occupant for resting and recuperation of energies so he can achieve his target. The occupant has to leave the house to go to his work place and after completing tasks he comes back to his house and gets ready for the next day.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Punarvasu has abundance of *rajas gunas* at basic and tertiary level. However at secondary level it is *sattva*. If we analyse the pattern of *gunas* of this asterism then we notice *rajas* attributes are playing an important role at two levels. Its basic and tertiary levels are controlled by *rajas gunas*. If we try to analyze the role of eight Vasus then one thing comes to mind that the primary role of Vasus was to establish a system for future activities. Without a proper functional system, desired results cannot be achieved.

At the secondary level *sattva* attribute operates. The whole configuration of *guna* indicates that soul is getting ready to move on a different plane by its directed activities. The symbol of bow also indicates the same phenomenon. The archer is sitting at a point and with the help of arrow he is aiming somewhere else. The same way house is also a launching pad for his activities. The person is neither at peace nor content but trying to achieve that with his constant actions. The series of *guna* speak volumes about itself, ie, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. When one starts his journey with knowledge or wisdom (*sattva*) then activities (*rajas*) happen at a non-doer level. This understanding of non-doer can never lead into inertia (*tamas*).

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Punarvasu-Jupiter-Mercury combination produces an exceptional mind with tremendous wisdom. Those

born under this combination have the ability to become the launching pad between the archer and the target. Invariably, their arrow establishes a perfect link in whatever they do in life. There is an impelling force to create essential conditions and background for themselves as well as for the people who follow them in future. They create a proper environment where fructification of efforts and the concretization of the will can take place easily. However, over intellectualization of their knowledge and wisdom can bring a steep downfall.

Punarvasu-Jupiter-Moon provides an almost ready platform from where the great drama of life can be enacted. Three-fourths of Punasvasu *nakshatra* is covered by the previous sign Gemini and one-fourths by the present sign Cancer. If the Jupiter-Mercury combination works in a manner which puts two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen together to create the possible environment for these to get converted to water, then Jupiter-Moon works in tandem to induce electricity at a high velocity to create water in reality. This could be the difference when we compare Punarvasu in the two signs of Gemini and Cancer. Fructification of efforts becomes a reality rather than only a mirage. There is deep-rooted confidence in the person's mind that if he takes the first step, then conquering even Mount Everest will become a reality.

You are blessed with a great capacity to work with a tremendously focused mind. The target is very clear to you and your total focus is on ways to achieve it. Most of your energy and time goes in positioning yourself. You work effortlessly and arouse your intellect to a level from where obtaining desired results is not difficult at all. Invariably, you work independently and attract the masses towards yourself with fantastic results. You are genuinely concerned for the ones you love and try your best to make things better.

You have clarity of goal at a very early age. There remains a great doubt on your ability for some but you are not one of those who give up their ideas after initial failures. You do not have any

sort of confusion in your foresightedness but the environment in which you work always creates a major challenge for you. There is a huge gap between reality and vision and your greatness lies in the fact that you bridge this gap beautifully. There are two main reasons — one, you see the possibility to fulfill your dream and, second, you want to create a conducive environment for those who want to do something different but lack in vision.

Your Drawbacks: Overindulgence with the mind or intellect can create a stumbling block. Sometimes, a conflict between wisdom and logic also creates a lot of confusion in your mind. At times, you are too critical to be tolerated by others. Sometimes, you remain so unconcerned about the results that your efforts go in vain.

Your likes and dislikes are so strong that they create utter confusion in your life. If you are wrongly convinced of an issue or situation then you can go overboard, expressing yourself unnecessarily. Sometimes, others find it difficult to bear your ego or over-assessment of yourself. Often, you not objective nor are you able to take a macro view of the situation.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUNARVASU NAKSHATRA

First stage (10 minutes): You need to find a quiet and comfortable place to sit everyday for 40 minutes. Sit down in a posture and feel comfortable with your body. Close your eyes and begin your exercise by exhaling. After exhaling is complete, now you are beginning the real exercise. Inhale slowly and gradually and fill your lungs with air. After inhaling is complete hold your breath for as many seconds as you can do easily. During this phase while you are holding your breath bring your attention at the base of your spine, ie, the Mooladhara Chakra, simultaneously recite a short mantra mentally, you can say Om. Start exhaling and empty your lungs completely and bring your attention on the top of your head or Crown Chakra. Hold your breath and again recite Om. Repeat this exercise for the next 10

minutes. Make sure you are inhaling and exhaling systematically and rhythmically. While you are inhaling or exhaling no need to recite any mantra. After doing this exercise for 10 minutes bring your attention on the third eye, ie, between the two eyebrows and start breathing normally and stop reciting the mantra. Keep sitting in the same posture while your eyes are closed. Wait for the instructions of the second phase.

Second Stage (10 minutes): You are already sitting in a particular posture breathing normally and your focus is on the third eye. During these 10 minutes start watching your body minutely from top to bottom internally. In the beginning you can observe the shape of your head outside and gradually start seeing your head, brain, forehead, eyes, nose, face, teeth, throat internally and keep on going the same way till your reach your toes. Observe each and every part of your body minutely and try to know as much as you can about your body by applying *nakshatra* meditation technique. At the same time you can energize each and every part of your body and see what an important role it is playing for yourself. If any part of your body is troublesome or gives pains, then stay on that part for a longer time and heal it with your pranic energy. Gradually you will find that your body is more vibrant, lively, dynamic and fully cooperative.

After completing this exercise for 10 minutes, bring your attention on your third eye and keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed and breathing normal.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Sit in the same posture with your gaze fixed on the third eye. During these 10 minutes try to see the emotional side of your being. In this world we have all kind of relationships with people around us. Some of our relationships are everlasting and some keep on troubling us from time to time. Some of them are so close to us therefore we cannot have any escape from these people. Although a lot of turmoil goes through

in between but the bond remains intact. If you also have such relationships and find it difficult to cope with them, then this is the time to train your mind otherwise. During this *nakshatra* meditation technique try to visualize those situations and how you end up reacting. It is not important at all how others behave because at the end of the day it is you who decides which side the whole episode is taking you ultimately. Instead of reacting under circumstances see how you can respond in the given situation. The moment you think of responding you are not acting on any previous judgment and your spontaneity will be at peak itself. Spontaneity will bring you immediately in the present and you will know how to respond.

If you practice few days you will not err and one day you will become master of your relationships.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same position and focus on the third eye and be ready for the *nakshatra* meditation. Your *nakshatra* Punarvasu is ruled by Aditi, the mother goddess. It bestows power of ability to gain wealth known as Vasutva Prapana Shakti. On the heavenly plane it is wind or air and on the worldly plane it is wetness or rain. Overall it has power of revitality of plants. As you know now that the ruling deity is the mother goddess. Bring your entire attention on your third eye, ie, between the two eyebrows. Imagine the presence of great mother goddess between your two eyebrows. This world is made of male and female energy which is also known as Shiva and *shakti* energy. The whole universe is made by two primordial forces and mother is the important factor of this manifestation. Your ruling deity is the mother goddess. Birth of human being is not possible without the same energy. Imagine the universal mother and see its role all around and your eternal connectivity with her. The first connection of a human being on this earth is mother. As you keep on relating yourself with that vital force you will find a new dimension of your being has started coming to the surface.

During this *nakshatra* meditation at the same time you need to work on your drawbacks of conflicts, confusion and ego hassles.

Pushya : (3° 20' — 16° 40' Cancer)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Pushya is the eighth *nakshatra* of the zodiac which extends from 93° 20' to 106° 40' and entirely resides in the sign of Cancer. It consists of three faint stars, looks like a triangle. The sign Cancer is ruled by the Moon. The presiding deity of the *nakshatra* is God Brahaspati who is also identified with the planet Jupiter. According to the Vedic literature lord Shiva made Brahaspati into the planet Jupiter. The literal meaning of Pushya is to nourish and it is also considered a god like *nakshatra* which is highly auspicious. The lord of Pushya *nakshatra* is Saturn which indicates that the tamsik proclivities are also attached with this *nakshatra*. Jupiter gets exalted here. The *nakshatra* is closely associated with two different powerful planets Saturn and Jupiter which also play their important role here. The basic attribute of *nakshatra* is *rajas*, with *sattva* at a secondary level and *tamas* at a tertiary level. The primary motivation of *nakshatra* is Dharma, honour.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Jupiter means expansion, growth, development. Its basic job is to nourish then protect that is why it is known as the most beneficiary planet of the zodiac. Saturn is just opposite to Jupiter. It believes in crystallizing the matter to perfection that can only be possible through concretizing and condensing the whole process. They may look opposite but as a matter of fact both are complemented to each other because to stabilize the materializing energy. It is very important that two opposite forces should be in action. Due to this paradoxical process an entirely new form starts taking place. This phenomenon can also be noticed in the symbol of a flower, circle and arrow. These three symbols of Pushya have a very essential role to play.

The first symbol of *nakshatra* is flower which indicates that flowering of the soul has started taking place but it does not give any direction as such. Spiritual perfection is directly related with the flowering of lotus, which is directly associated with the spiritual awakening of the soul or Kundalini Shakti. That stage hasn't arrived here but flowering is taking place which means some sort of germination of spiritual process is already taking place. The second symbol of the asterism is a circle and third is arrow. Circle also indicates that completion is taking place and with the arrow one can find its target within the circle.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The sequence of *gunas* is found in the following series in this *nakshatra*. On its basic level it is *rajas*, *sattva* at the secondary and *tamas* at the tertiary level. As we are aware, the first nine *nakshatras* of the zodiac are predominated by *rajas* attributes. The same pattern is followed by this *nakshatra*. *Rajas* attribute indicates a keen desire to prove oneself because *rajas* denotes activities. The basis of action lies in desire. If there is no passion or desire then real action will not take place. The lord of *nakshatra* is Saturn but the presiding deity is God Brahaspati. The primal generating force of the action lies in basic *rajas* attributes. Due to the huge influence of Jupiter as a ruling deity, the basic attributes are converted into *sattva* at the secondary level. Since the *nakshatra* is ruled by Saturn which has abundance of tamsik attributes in him therefore at the tertiary level we find that *tamas* is ruling the roost. The sequence of attributes is not forming in the natural course therefore this sort of difference ought to happen.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Pushya-Saturn-Moon combination creates quite a paradoxical situation for the person in the beginning. There is confusion, lack of clarity and sometimes a very negative atmosphere which throws challenges and gives you opportunity to prove yourself. Limitations created by Pushya in

the beginning work tremendously in the person's favour because it helps to condense and crystallize all the energy and force available to the individual. A specific destiny is assigned to the individual who cannot blossom in the real sense but optimum achievement can be gained.

There is tremendous urge to mature as fast as possible. You are not unduly agitated at any point of time in your life because you carry tremendous faith in yourself and know that fullness of life will take place ultimately. You always have unflinching confidence in yourself and believe in the divine plan. You face two sorts of adversities in life — either circumstantially or created by yourself. The day realization hits you, you are a transformed person. You want to help those who have fallen and are trapped in your sort of situation. Your understanding of human psyche and relationship is marvellous.

Your Drawbacks: You can be arrogant, stubborn and selfish at times. Sometimes, your self-indulgence in a wrong habit could be quite scary. You need to be more discriminating while choosing your friends, as wrong emotional influences can become a stumbling block in your life.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUSHYA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): You need to find a permanent place for yourself where you can sit everyday and perform *nakshatra* meditation techniques.

Sit down in a posture which makes you comfortable and relaxed. Shut your eyes and be ready to do the following exercise. Begin the exercise with exhaling. Empty your stomach completely and now start inhaling gradually and deeply. Once you have inhaled completely then hold your breath for few seconds. Bring your attention at the base of your spine, first Kundalini Chakra and recite a small mantra mentally. After holding the breath and reciting the mantra for few seconds start exhaling and completely empty your lungs. Hold your breath for

the same number of seconds and bring your attention on the top of your head or seventh Kundalini Chakra. Recite the mantra while holding your breath. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes. There is no need to recite the mantra while inhaling or exhaling. This exercise will put you at rest and your awareness will start peaking gradually.

Keep on sitting in the same posture and wait for the instructions for the second stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During this stage start breathing normally and bring your attention on the third eye ie, between the two eyebrows. Your eyes should remain closed throughout this *nakshatra* meditation technique. Gradually start looking mentally at your body from top to bottom. This observation needs to be done slowly as well as systematically. In the beginning watch your head, face, arms, chest, stomach, thighs, legs, feet, in other words the entire body. You need to watch each and every part of your body internally also. Try to locate your kidneys, and see its connection and if possible then function also. Perhaps you may not know about your kidneys, it would be better if you see any elementary book of anatomy which will give you not only the clue of kidneys but each and every part of your body. Human body serves him/her endlessly. When it is tired and diseased then the problem starts generating from that part. All of us over use our bodies and get fatigued. Human body is also bestowed with recapturing energies and it bounces back and is ready to be used again.

It serves you the best possible way and now it is your turn to do something about it. During *nakshatra* meditation heal each and every part of your body and pamper it the best possible way. You will be amazed that your body will respond to your action and serve better than before.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Bring back your attention on the third eye and keep on breathing normally. Your eyes should remain

closed. These 10 minutes should be utilized to heal yourself emotionally. The world operates only due to mind. And mind operates on feelings, emotions, ideas, connectivity which ends in some form of relationship. It is not easy to make relationship and it is more difficult to maintain and continue them. Since human mind never operates on a linear way therefore difference of opinion, break-up in relationship, fight, jealousy, envy and enmity are bound to happen.

The problem of human mind is that matter never ends over there. A relationship rather ends easily, however, matter never ends over there. The mind has a tendency to go back into the same situation over and over again and feel the same heat and agony and sometimes there is no respite from these sorts of situations. If we say others are responsible for miseries then we are no less anyway. Put yourself into witness box and observe your doings.

These 10 minutes are very important and you need to erase all those feelings, emotions, hurt, miseries which still keep on troubling you. If you find difficult to do so then in your mind and soul sitting in the same position you can pardon those who have done wrong to you in the past. In the same way in your mind and soul you can tell others to pardon you. So your mind and soul is free from any guilt of past.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep on sitting in the same posture while breathing normally. Bring your attention on the third eye between the two eyebrows and be ready for the *nakshatra* meditation.

Pushya *nakshatra* is ruled by the diety Brahaspati, the Vedic god of wisdom. Its power is the ability to create spiritual energy (Brahmavarchasva Shakti). On the heavenly plane it denotes sacrificial worship on the worldly plane it indicates worshipping. Brahaspati is also known as divine guru. While sitting in the same posture you can think of any guru which you have and if you don't have any then you can think of any god or goddess

of your choice. Imagine that god and realize its power and energy and try to be one with that. If you do it regularly and with intensity then you will see that god or the source of energy has started transforming you. You can increase your worship and whatever hurdles you face in life you can overcome them. You can also organize your day to day life being one with your god and seeking guidance everyday.

You must be aware of your drawbacks. They are arrogance, stubbornness and selfish at times. You need to overcome these impediments by adopting *nakshatra* meditation techniques.

Ashlesha : (16° 40' — 30° 00' Cancer)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Ashlesha is the ninth asterism of the zodiac. It extends from 106° 40' to 120° 0' and completely resides within the sign of Cancer. It consists of a circle of six stars in the constellation of Hydra, the female water snake. The meaning of Ashlesha is entangle the person or object completely. The *nakshatra* is ruled by Mercury and the sign Cancer is governed by the Moon. The motivating force of the *nakshatra* is Dharma, principle. Its basic attribute is rajsik, however, it is *sattva* at secondary and tertiary level. The deity of *nakshatra* is Naga, the serpent king and it presents Kundalini or serpent fire which is located in the base of spine in the coil form. One can experience the enlightenment when Kundalini Shakti is awakened.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The serpent symbol is deeply associated with the man's psyche right from the time immemorial. All ancient religions of the world had used this symbol in many different allegories. In Indian ancient literature, serpent symbol has been used widely. Although reptile snake is the most feared one because it can kill the object with its fatal bite, that happens only when it is provoked, does not matter whether intentionally or not. Otherwise he follows his own path. Kundalini Shakti is a mystic

knowledge which is directly connected with spiritual awakening. There are three things connected with this symbol — one is snake, second is poison and third is mysticism. This energy is generally understood to be quite dangerous but if one can awaken the Kundalini energy then he can liberate himself within one birth.

According to Christianity the beginning of the world happens due to the presence of snake. Had the serpent not induced Eve to eat the apple in the Garden of Eden perhaps the beginning of the world would not have taken place. In Indian literature serpent energy is used in various forms. All our gods and goddesses have had serpent as one of their ornaments. It is also believed the world is balanced on the head of Sheshnaga, the huge serpent. According to another fable, Vishnu floats in the Kshira-Sagar, the ocean of milk on the bed of a huge snake. When the churning of the ocean took place at the beginning of the cosmic creation by the gods and demons the Sheshnaga was used as the churning rope. Lord Shiva and serpent are synonymous to each other. Serpent energy or Kundalini Shakti is considered the most electrifying energy in the world of spirituality. Besides, snake is also deeply connected with sex, power, money, wealth and hidden knowledge. In India snakes are worshiped widely.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Gunas follow a different pattern in this *nakshatra*. Its basic is *rajas* and abundance of *sattva* attributes are found at secondary and tertiary level. If we analyze the serpent energy then we can understand a different phenomenon of *gunas* in this *nakshatra*. At primary level it is *rajas* which indicates activities, involvement, desire, passion to achieve something. On the worldly plane serpent energy is connected with money, power, wealth, sex and achievements. The basic desire to own something is the main attribute of *rajas gunas* but at the secondary and tertiary level will decide the ultimate object of the

action or desire. Serpent fire is directly connected with mystic knowledge or Kundalini Shakti or even devotion. Once the ignorance is replaced by knowledge then there is no need to cling on your basic achievements, it may be sex, money, wealth, power or worldly experiences. Since there is abundance of *sattva* attributes at secondary and tertiary level which automatically leads to knowledge and wisdom. Once wisdom dawns upon somebody then he will not remain the same which he was in the beginning.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: People born under the Ashlesha-Mercury-Moon combination are highly intelligent, clever and understand human psyche perfectly. They possess a great potential for mental development. They are intellectually very sharp and understand the nuances of whichever art they take up seriously in life. Their latent knowledge of understanding new challenges is terrific and they have the ability to become masters at whatever they do. Their personality remains mysterious and they are unpredictable in their behavioural pattern also. They carry some sort of split personality which is why they could be extremely good or bad according to the situation.

You are active, willing to take initiatives and capable of putting all your energy behind it. You are a keen observer of your surroundings and learn at the speed of light. You cannot tolerate any form of personal humiliation and if you are provoked by somebody or even by a situation, you make sure you prove your worth convincingly. Many times, you become aware of your real potential only after facing trauma in life. You also have a phenomenal ability to rise from the ashes. You are quite reclusive, self-reliant and happy with you isolation. You are very kind and gentle, and willing to help those who seek help from you.

Your Drawbacks: You are not completely aware of your temper; many times it takes you by surprise. Sometimes, your worries,

fears and even mental instability create a chaotic environment for you. Your restlessness and self-deception can lead to psychic vulnerability.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASHLESHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): During these 10 minutes sit down in a place where you are most comfortable and relaxed. Make sure your spine is erect, it is very essential because when spine is erect then the flow of energy happens uninterrupted throughout the body. Start your exercise with exhaling. Inhale slowly and gradually. Fill your lungs with air and when the inhaling is done completely, then hold your breath for few seconds then during this time recite a small mantra say Om. This mantra should be done mentally. After few seconds start exhaling slowly and rhythmically and exhale completely. Hold your breath for the same number of seconds which you have done earlier. Recite the same mantra which you have done earlier and repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes. After doing this exercise for 10 minutes you will notice that you are more relaxed and calm and the train of thoughts has stopped to a great extent. Keep on sitting in the same posture and be ready for the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep on sitting in the same posture and bring your attention on the third eye between the two eyebrows. Drop mantra and breathe normally. Body is a vehicle and whatever we experience it is through body only. It is also believed that by controlling the senses body's potential can increase to the optimum to get desired results. Start watching your body mentally from head to toe. Do this exercise very slowly and looking at each and every organ of your body externally as well as internally. Try to know how your heart functions. How the arteries bring purified blood to the heart and veins take away unpurified blood. If you observe minutely then you can even hear your heart beat which will echo near your ear drums. This will be a different experience which you might not

have noticed ever. It is heart which gets us involved in this world, try to see why it does so. The same way observe all the organs of the body and keep on healing them also with your pranic energy. If any part of your body is diseased or gives you trouble from time to time then heal it more. If you do this exercise for few days you will be surprised yourself that your body's vitality is increasing tremendously and you know your body much better than earlier.

Third Stage (10 minutes): In this stage, continue sitting in the same posture and bring your attention on the third eye. You should breathe normally. It is very important to connect yourself entirely with the present. It can only be possible when you are free from past burden and future expectations. Mind has a tendency of wandering either in past or in future and never remains still. Sometimes the burden of past or memories of failure, trouble, humiliation never leave the mind alone. This is also an impediment which is why one cannot go into deep meditation. If you have any bad memory of past then it is very important to erase those memories. At the same time it is not easy to erase those memories. Follow this simple technique which may work with you because it has given fantastic results to many people. One simple way of doing it is forgive and forget with your conscious mind and be rid of it. If that is not feasible then try another technique. If you were humiliated sometime in the past and still feel the hurt of it then try to analyze that nobody is humiliating you now. It is only your mind which keeps on taking you into that situation and you are having a flash back of the entire episode as it is happening now. See the validity yourself and that incidence or happening will drop automatically in front of you and your mind will be free from past burden.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture for 10 minutes more and bring back your attention on the third eye

ie, between the two eyebrows. Your *nakshatra* is Ashlesha is ruled by serpent god. Its power is to inflict with poison (Visasleshana Shakti). On the heavenly plane it is the approach of serpent and on the worldly plane, it is trembling and irritation. Serpent fire is directly connected with the Kundalini Shakti. Bring all your attention on the base of spine or Mooladhara, the first chakra and concentrate on your Kundalini Shakti. With the grace of the serpent god, you may one day be able to know that the mysterious power is lying within you. You can also bring your attention on the third eye during this *nakshatra* meditation and request Kundalini Shakti to free you from all the negativity and lead you towards purity. If you can connect correctly with your inner self then everything is possible.

During *nakshatra* meditation you need to work on your temper, fears and restlessness.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Nakshatra Meditation Technique – II

Here are some *asanas* and breathing techniques of Maharishi Patanjali. Maharishi Patanjali has advocated many *asanas* (postures) for meditation out which three are popular and easy to do also. Before one begins meditation it is very important that one sits in a position which is comfortable and easy to perform. Since *nakshatra* meditation technique takes 40 minutes therefore it is essential to select a suitable *asana* for oneself.

Steps for Siddhasana

Sit down on the floor with legs extended in front of you. Fold the left leg at the knee and place the sole of the left foot against the inner right thigh. Place the left heal inside near the Mooladhara Chakra. Fold the right leg and put the right foot on the left leg between the calf and thigh. Make sure spine and head are erect.

PADMASANA

Sit on the floor. Fold the right leg at the knee. Put the right foot on the left thigh with your hands. Now bend the left leg at the knee. Put the left foot on the thigh of left leg with your hands. Your spine and neck should remain erect.

SUKHASANA

Sit on the floor while extending your both legs in front of you. Put the left foot under the right thigh. Fold the right foot under the left thigh. Place your both hands on the knees. Keep your head and neck erect. One can select any of the three asanas which one is comfortable doing. When you sit in any of these asanas for a long time you become Siddhasana. In other words you master the art of that posture.

PRANAYAM

Sage Patanjali evolved many techniques of *pranayam*. Out of these, *rechak* (exhaling slowly), *purak* (inhaling slowly) and *kumbhak* (holding the breath) are best for meditation. Your body becomes free of toxins and might start settling down gradually. Patanjali further explains to master the art of *pranayam* one needs to do the following breathing techniques.

BAHYA VRITTI

Bahya Vritti is also known as Bahya Kumbhaka. Full exhalation is called Bahya Kumbhaka or suspension of breath. After exhaling completely, hold the breath and start counting and note down those numbers. Gradually increase this duration with regular practice.

ABHYANTARA VRITTI

After full inhalation of breath hold it inside as long as you can do it easily. Keep on increasing the interval with regular practice. It is also known as Antara (Madhya) Kumbhaka, the suspension of breath.

STAMBHA VRITTI

Besides these two techniques the third Stambha Vritti (Kumbaka) is retention of breath. During the process of inhaling and exhaling to stop the breath where it is, is known as Stambha Vritti, retention of breath. Count the interval and

gradually keep on increasing. This technique is also known as Kewal Kumbhaka (ultimate retention).

These are the three techniques — *rechak, kumbhak* and *purak* can be done by any person on this earth. Depending on the ability of the seeker one can learn the art of *pranayam* and perfect it.

Magha : (0° 0' — 13° 20' Leo)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Magha is the tenth asterism of the zodiac which extends from 120° 00' to 133° 20' and the entire *nakashatra* resides within the sign Leo. Magha's main star is Regulus, the brightest star of Alpha Leo. Magha means the great or the mighty one. The presiding deity of the asterism is Pitris, the fathers or the great ancestors of the humanity. The symbol of *nakshatra* is palanquin (*palki*) on which a king, or a pilgrim or a new bride is carried by the bearers from one place to another. The ruling planet of Magha is Ketu whereas the sign Leo is ruled by the mighty planet Sun. The primary motivation of Magha is Arth, seeking specific goals. Its basic attribute is *tamas* or inertia and it has *rajas*, activities at secondary and tertiary levels.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The presiding deity of the asterism is the father of humanity. The ancestors of humanity have been given a special responsibility of providing the proper guidance to their families on this planet. They are the guiding force and live in *Pitri's Lok* (Ancestor's abode) and when they find that their progenies are in dire trouble or deviating from the righteous path, then they help them. If their progenies are progressing on the defined path then they just oversee the progress and enjoy. They are also known as guardian angels who keep on protecting their progenies from disasters. Due to their influence many rituals and traditions are being followed by their progenies.

At this stage the individual increasingly becomes self-centered. He wants to grow rapidly and achieve everything in

an isolated manner. His ego is inflated and he wants to carve a niche for himself and prove to others his superiority. For him the self-respect, family pride, racial superiority, class status etc. takes a centre stage and he works for that. If any restriction or boundaries are put against him then he becomes restless and a rebel to an extent. The other meaning of the word — Magha is an island. He wants to create his own world or an island and uses all his energy, force to achieve his desires. At times he isolates himself from the group and suffers in isolation also. Ketu is the lord of the asterism and is a highly spiritual planet. A soul needs that kind of environment where it has to be separated from the whole to understand its own limitations and restrictions. Unless and until that has not been understood the soul cannot advance further.

In this reference the symbol of Palanquin is very important. Palanquin is carried by people and the person who sits on it, either a king or a pilgrim or a bride holds a special status. The same way when due to the influence of spiritual planet Ketu, the Tamsik attributes of self are overcome then lift is available to move toward the higher destination.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The sequence of *gunas* follows as *tamas* at basic level, inertia and *rajas,* activity at secondary and tertiary levels.

It is noted that from Magha to Jyeshtha, all nine *nakshatras* which start from sign Leo to Scorpio come under *tamas gunas.*

The basic attribute of Magha is *tamas,* inertia. If we analyse the *nakshatra* then the soul starts operating at the selfish level. Perhaps the individual believes that he is too big and capable or the ego is so inflated that he cannot see any limitation under which it has to operate. When the *tamas* attribute or inertia rules the roost then the veil of ignorance covers the intellect and one cannot see beyond self. *Tamsik guna* also denotes that suffering has to take place at the deepest level only then one can proceed towards the higher level.

The motivational force of the asterism is *arth* or material prosperity. The motivational force sets the second stage for the soul to look beyond self and get into activities. The abundance of *rajas* attributes at the secondary and tertiary make it possible to get involved with the worldly pleasures. Desire takes a centre stage and directed actions follow.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Magha-Ketu-Sun combination sets the stage for an individual to ready his mind to take decisions and direct all the energy at his disposal to attain desired goals. Evolution is ready to take place as the soul carries forward the divine mission. There is tremendous courage and energy to accomplish any task once the person gets started. This configuration makes people highly ambitious and bestows them with leadership qualities. You are magnanimous in your attitude and totally devoted to those you love. You have the ability to express your ideas, doctrines and philosophy in a beautiful way.

You believe you are indebted to take care of humanity and act as a father figure. Perhaps this element of responsibility enables you to become a guiding force for your family, nation, etc. Although your ideas remain quite contradictory, you overcome the situation with efforts. One part of your being is very keen to get into action while the other part does not want to come out of inertia. With constant action and understanding, you are large-hearted and go a step ahead to help the ones you care about.

Your Drawbacks: You can be extremely arrogant and prejudiced about certain ideas and people. Sometimes, it is very difficult for you to achieve your lofty and impractical ideas. Overindulgence in sexual activities can be the main cause of your downfall. Too much materialism or overpossession could also bring your progress to a half.

NAKSHATRA MEDITATION TECHNIQUE

You need to find a place in your house where you can sit for 40 minutes at peace with yourself. Make sure you are least disturbed over there. If you are sitting on the ground then put a thick blanket underneath or a cushion and sit on it daily. Patanjali suggests that you can select any asana among the following — Siddhasana, Padmasana or Sukhasana. If you find other asanas difficult then Sukhasana is a comfortable pose and easiest to do.

Patanjali also suggests three main methods of *pranayam*, they are *rechak, purak* and *kumbhaka*. These *asanas* or *pranayams* have been explained in the previous chapter, which you can learn from there.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAGHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a comfortable posture and keep your spine and neck erect. Always start the exercise by exhaling. Now inhale gradually and slowly empty the entire air from your stomach. Hold the breath as long as you can do and bring your attention at the base of your spine or at Mooladhara Chakra (the First Chakra). While you are holding the breath you can count or recite a small mantra mentally. Gradually start exhaling, empty your lungs of air. Hold the breath as long as you can do it easily. Bring your attention on the top of your head or Crown Chakra (the Seventh Chakra) and recite the same mantra. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes. Gradually you will find that your mind is devoid from the train of thoughts and you are at peace within yourself. After 10 minutes breathe normally and drop the mantra. Bring your attention at the Heart Chakra which is located between the centre of the ribs. Focus your attention there and wait for the instructions of second stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): You are already sitting in a comfortable posture and breathing normally. Your attention is on the Heart Chakra. During these 10 minutes you need to

know the internal functions of different organs of your body and energize them with your pranic energy. You can start this exercise from observing your head; initially from outside then gradually see the function of brain. Likewise keep on watching each and every part of your body mentally. While watching different parts of the body, try to identify in the beginning with yourself and energize them. If any part of the body is troubling you or having any problem then heal it more.

One more thing you can do is to detach yourself absolutely from your body and watch it as it doesn't belong to you, still very relevant for your existence. This small realization is fully capable of taking you into different trance which you might not have experienced earlier.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture and breath normally. Bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra and be ready for the third stage. Heart is the basic source of connectivity at two important levels. Human organism is alive only because of the function of the heart. The moment it stops the human body becomes a corpse. If other internal parts of the body become dysfunctional, still one can survive and life goes on. But that is not true with the heart. Similarly, all our wordly relationships exist due to the heart. This clearly implies that the heart is the source of life, light, energy, joy and happiness. Through this heart man also experiences all kinds of miseries, pains, trial and turbulences, difficulty, agony etc.

During this *nakshatra* meditation technique your job is to free your heart from all kind of pressures whether they are personal, social or supernatural. Try to understand and analyze each and every relation and see their worth. It will not take you very long to understand the futility of this world and you will get a chance to connect with your inner-self.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Bring back your attention on the heart once again. Keep sitting and breathing comfortably. Your

nakshatra Magha is ruled by ancestors which are the guiding force of humanity. The power of your *nakshatra* is to leave the body also known as Tyag Kshepani Shakti. On the heavenly plane it is mourning and on the worldly plane leaving the body. Overall this *shakti* represents death.

If anything is permanent after birth that is death. Everything else is impermanent. If we see death from the esoteric point of view then death is also impermanent, however, after the birth of an individual on this planet death is inevitable. Try to do meditation on your death and imagine your death in all kind of forms which may happen after 100 years, that is not relevant but imagine your death very closely during this *nakshatra* meditation technique. Watch your dead body yourself and it is being crowded by relatives and friends. It is unbearable for some of them but others are unconcerned waiting to finish rituals so they can proceed towards their personal agenda. Say good bye to all of them and feel very light and free.

While doing this meditation request or pray to Tyag Kshepani Shakti or ancestors to guide you in your day to day activities.

The concept of life will look different to you all of a sudden and it may transform your life thoroughly.

During these *nakshatra* meditation you need to work on your drawbacks especially about arrogance and prejudice. If you work regularly then you will overcome these impediments easily.

Purva Phalguni : (13° 20' — 26° 40' Leo)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Purva Phalguni is the eleventh asterism of the zodiac which extends from 133° 20' to 146° 40' resides within sign Leo ruled by the Sun. It consists of two stars, can be seen at the rear flank of the lion. The symbols of the *nakshatra* are a couch, platform and fire place. The meaning of Purva Phalguni is 'the fruit of the tree'. The ruling planet of the asterism is sensuous Venus and the Vedic deity of *nakshatra* is Bhag, the god of fortune and bliss. Its basic attribute is *tamas*, inertia, *rajas* at a secondary

and *tamas* at the tertiary level. The primary motivation of the asterism is *kama*, desire or healthy enjoyments.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

As a matter of fact these two asterisms — Purva and Uttara Phalguni (next asterism) put together form one constellation consisting or four stars represented as the four legs of a cot. However there is little but subtle difference between these two asterisms which reflects by their presiding deities. Purva Phalguni's Vedic deity is Bhag and Uttara Phalguni's deity is Aryaman. Both these deities Bhag and Aryaman are extremely auspicious and bestowed with riches, affluence, comfort and prosperity. Both of them are also considered auspicious in their character. It has been mentioned in Vedas that with their blessings and support one can become victorious and overcome all difficulties.

The symbols of Purva Phalguni are extremely significant and it has three symbols. The first symbol of the asterism is a cot which is used for sitting, resting and sleeping. To fulfill the duties of life, rest or interval is very important to rejuvenate one's energy for the next journey. The other symbol of *nakshatra* is a fire place which serves a different purpose altogether. In the ancient times a guru would sit around the fire place with his disciples and impart his knowledge and experience with them. Fire provides warmth which also necessitates for future activities. Platform is the third symbol of the asterism. It is also a launching place for future journeys. All these symbols indicate that a stage is set for future activities. It is noted that Lord Shiva's marriage journey began in this constellation. His marriage indicates the divine energy is taking a centre stage for spiritual activities.

In this sense Purva Phalguni creates an environment where dynamic energy can express itself. Soul is also getting ready to move towards external realm to discharge its divine responsibility. Asterism itself stands for readiness where energy is plunged into action. The motivational force of the asterism is

kama, passion, desire which makes the native over enthusiastic to take active part in sensuous pleasures. The lord of *nakshatra* is sensuous Venus which also operates as a catalyst and enjoyment, luxury, comfort, physical pleasure becomes the main theme of personality.

The deity of the asterism is bhaga which has two distinct meanings, one is auspicious bliss and another meaning of bhaga is the female reproductive organ which is the source of the birth of an individual. On the physical level it awakens the sensuous energy but at the deeper level it has a divinity in itself. The basic job of bhaga is procreation which directly relates with creativity that is why Bhaga and lingam are deeply interconnected and worshiped as Shiva Lingam which is also the symbol of *nakshatra*.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The basic and tertiary attributes of *nakshatra* are *tamas*, inertia with *rajas*, activities at secondary level. The motivational force of the *nakshatra* is *kama*, ie, desire. Whenever the ego is motivated by *kama* or intense desire then indulgence (*tamas*) will rule the roost. The intensity of desire is such that it blinds the person and he cannot limit himself. Overindulgence into any sensuous pleasure is bound to lead into a deep fall. However at secondary level *rajas* attributes operate but due to overindulgence one cannot assess the forthcoming losses. Tamsik attributes also operates at tertiary level which further indicates that unless and until ego takes the soul into deep indulgence the real awakening cannot take place. It is very essential for ego to touch rock bottom. Once it reaches there and sees the condition into which it has brought itself that realization itself bounces back at the speed of light.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: Purva Phalguni-Venus-Sun bestows the person with riches, affluence and material prosperity. This combination

raises high expectations of becoming a king, warrior or a person well-versed in a particular religious order. The basic impulse of people born in this combination is to be ready to take the plunge into something different or unique. The person is extremely passionate and ever enthusiastic to undertake any activity with tremendous vitality and energy. Sometimes, his force works to his advantage, and at times to his disadvantage, depending upon the situation. The amount of energy poured into activities generally makes him successful in his endeavours.

You are highly imaginative as well as creative. You have the ability to give a new meaning to your sexuality. Perhaps, this is the reason that whenever you undertake a new challenge, you suddenly feel totally virile, energetic and extremely forceful as one would. You know how to transform sexual energy into a dynamic force. You have the capacity to overcome all adversities and come out victorious. There is a great thirst in you to have a direct experience in most of the things you want to do. You are keen to share your experience, happiness, wealth and enjoyment with others — most of all, with the ones you love.

Your Drawbacks: Overindulgence in sex, drugs, alcohol could bring your downfall. Sometimes, your self-centeredness can be a source of great anxiety to you. Refrain from black magic or half-cooked tantra. The urge to show off can also add on trouble to your life.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PURVA PHALGUNI NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): During the first stage of 10 minutes sit down in any of the following asanas — Siddhasana, Padmasana and Sukhasana. Close your eyes, keep your spine and neck erect and start the exercise with exhaling. After emptying your lungs start inhaling gradually and completely. Once the inhaling is complete hold your breath for a few seconds. Bring your attention on the base of your spine or Mooladhara Chakra and recite a small mantra say Om but mentally. Gradually start exhaling and empty your lungs completely. Hold your breath for the same number of

seconds as you have done earlier. Bring your attention on the top of your head or the crown chakra and recite the same mantra. Keep on repeating this exercise for the next 10 minutes. There is no need to recite the mantra while you are inhaling or exhaling. After 10 minutes start breathing normally, drop the mantra and bring your attention on your heart chakra located at the centre of your ribs and be ready for the second stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed and mind focused on the Heart Chakra. During these 10 minutes you need to know much more of your body and its functions. Start observing your body from head to toe very gradually and lovingly. You can look at your body from the outer as well as inner angle. You are aware of your body from the outer surface but you might have not noticed ever how your intestines are functioning inside your stomach. If you observe it very minutely then it will be a different experience altogether. In the same way observe each and every organ of your body regularly. You can take the help of an elementary anatomy book of the body which will give you a fair idea how it operates. While observing your body, keep on healing the entire body with your pranic energy. If any part of your body is the source of anxiety or trouble then heal it more. Within few days of practice you will be amazed yourself to know how vibrant and lively your body has become.

Third Stage (10 minutes): During these 10 minutes bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra and keep your eyes closed and breathe normally. These 10 minutes are very important to unburden your mind from all kinds of events from childhood till now. During this phase of *nakshatra* meditation try to know your entire past right from the age of three years. When you gradually go into your past then you will see many events which have happened long time back in your life but your mind still reminisce those events. Invariably mind has a tendency to cling on the negative events which have taken place sometime

long in the past but still keep on bothering us from time to time. There are certain issues we want to address sometime in future and waste a lot of energy on that. Observe if you also have those kind of memories and if yes then try to rid your mind from all those past happenings. If you really want to start your spiritual journey then it is very pertinent for you to clean the slate of your mind from the irrelevant past.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed and breathing normally. Bring back your attention on your Heart Chakra. The Vedic deity of your asterism is Bhaga, the god of happiness. Its power is giving of accumulation, 'Chyani Shakti' through marriage or union. On the heavenly level it is wealth gained from one's own family and on the worldly level it is the wealth gained from ones partner. Overall it's accumulation of wealth. The presiding deity of this *nakshatra* is Bhaga, the god of happiness and one of the symbols of *nakshatra* is Shiva Lingam which makes it very powerful and creative. Shiva Lingam is part of our collective psyche right from the beginning of this world. In India Shiva Lingams are worshiped throughout the country and twelve Jyotir Lingams are the ancient sources of spiritual energy which are also spread all over the country. Pray to Shiva Lingam and be one of them. If you want you can connect with any of the twelve Jyotir Lingams then it will elevate your soul to a new horizon. If you do it continuously you will see a paradigm shift in your personality. During this *nakshatra* meditation you also need to work on the negative side of your personality which goes for overindulgence and pleasure and sensory attachments.

Uttara Phalguni: (26° 40' Leo — 10° 0' Virgo)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Uttara Phalguni is the twelfth *nakshatra* of the zodiac and it is also the later part of Purva Phalguni. Uttara Phalguni extends from 146° 40' to 160° 0' of the zodiac. The asterism resides in

two fixed stars at the tail of the loin but *nakshatra* itself extends in the next constellation of Virgo. The first quarter of the *nakshatra* from 26° 40' to 30° 00' resides in Leo sign governed by the Sun, which provides the native with tremendous possibilities of growth, development and creative expression. The remaining three quarters of the asterism which extends from 0° 0' to 10° 0' in sign Virgo is ruled by Mercury. Virgo and Mercury put together create a wonderful environment which enables the native to develop his/her latent potential including yogic powers. The lord of *nakshatra* is the powerful planet of the zodiac is the Sun. Its basic attribute is *tamas*, inertia with *rajas* at secondary and *sattva* at tertiary levels. The primary motive of the asterism is *moksha*, ie, liberation.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

It is noted that Phalgunis are twin cousins. One is Purva and second is Uttara Phalguni. Therefore some features, symbols and activities are somewhat identical. The symbol of Uttara Phalguni is also four legs of a coat which connect them with each other. Uttara Phalguni represents the two real legs of the coat which have the ability of healing others. The presiding deity of the asterism is Aryaman. Aryaman, a Vedic god is known for his leadership and noble qualities. The unity of Phalguni needs a deeper insight to know the multi-faceted approach of a four-legged cot. On the lower plane the utility of cot is well-known and understood. On the higher plane the unity of four legs makes the world complete itself because the entire Universe is enclosed and creates an environment where four natural forces can operate easily. The quarternity can be interpreted in many ways. The beginning of universe is related with the four heads of Brahma, the four dimensions of the space and the four Vedas. There are four stages of human life and there are four duties one needs to perform to live life comprehensively. The world is also made of four walls as is the house where man lives. The number four provides the basic

environment from where life or understanding starts happening or taking place. The fifth dimension is space or absolute reality known as Brahma.

As you know all *nakshatras* are divided into four quarters. The first quarter of Uttara Phalguni *nakshatra* falls in Leo sign which provides a very secure environment for the native and without any restriction. The opportunities are available in abundance to the native for his growth and development. The last three quarters fall under Virgo and ruled by vibrant planet Mercury. Virgo sign is deeply related with the mysteries of the nature. This sign also bestows the native with hidden powers. The planet Mercury is fully capable of exploring the hidden qualities of the brain. The sign Virgo represents the nature at large and Mercury provides the needed intellect to understand the hidden forces which control the nature. Therefore the possibilities of spiritual growth and mental expansion are tremendous under this asterism. If one takes keen interest then mystery of nature and space can be understood to a great extent. This asterism is also provided with tremendous energy so one can gaze at the vastness of the Universe. Whenever one tumbles in his mission or feels isolated then there is Aryaman, the presiding deity who assures the success in mission because he himself is a superman and does not like his people, those born under this asterism, to face permanent blockade in life.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The sequence of *gunas* follows as such — *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*. The natural pattern of *gunas* is *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. However in this *nakshatra* it is just opposite — *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*. This pattern of *gunas* makes this *nakshatra* extremely significant. *Tamas* represents inertia, dullness, darkness or ignorance. When ego touches the lowest ebb of its being then veil of ignorance (Avidya) covers it completely. That does not seem to happen particularly in this asterism because soul is in a restless stage and makes perpetual efforts and brings

it on the secondary level of *rajas*. When passion or desire takes over the soul then the next direction will be decided by the primary motivation of the *nakshatra*. The motivation of Uttara Phalguni is *moksha* or liberation which automatically directs the soul towards *sattva* at the tertiary level. The diety of *nakshatra* is Aryaman which is also considered as the Sun who provides the guidance, energy, courage, confidence to be a winner and achieve the target.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: Uttara Phalguni-Sun-Sun combination provides immense activities to the people born under this *nakshatra*. Uttara Phalguni bestows tremendous basic power, hidden urge and restlessness which could become the driving force to attain something meaningful. Before they achieve something important, they must go through the process of chaos. Unless and until courage, confidence, endurance and an ability to fight is instilled, they cannot achieve their desire. Since you are aware of your potential, perhaps this is why you fight with all your might to achieve something extraordinary. This combination is a mixture of ambition, fight, difficulties and righteous struggle. Persons born under this *nakshatra* are bestowed with a tremendous force to overcome constraints and restrictions.

The Uttara Phalguni-Sun-Mercury combination possesses latent potentiality that could be used in various yogic powers. Uttara Phalguni also indicates that the creative energy is ready to bestow the native with the best in every possible way. A person born under this combination possesses an inherent power which constantly pushes restless energy to take a concrete shape under any circumstance. This constellation also enables the person to fight with all his might until he achieves his desired goal. There is an inherent urge to fulfill aspirations through righteous means and it does not bother the person if, in the process, he or she faces tremendous difficulties.

You are eager to fight your way to achieve leadership in your desired field. You also believe very strongly that if efforts are righteous, then the desired results are not very far off. You can bear all sorts of difficulties and hassles once results are assured. You have no problem in standing alone or in isolation, but once you decide to get into action, then you focus all your energy to achieve laurels. You have a self-belief that safety, peace and comfort can only be achieved while engaged in meaningful actions. You are very kind and generous to people you feel deeply associated with.

You are extremely hopeful about your abilities. There is a tremendous positive belief in you that possibilities will never shut their doors on you. You cannot be tied down with limitations and always want to explore the vastness of the universe. You prefer to stand alone and live in isolation but once you have decided to engage in action, your commitment is unbelievable. As achievements make you feel secure and confident, you direct all your energies to achieve worldly things. You have the ability to explore the hidden aspects of your nature and utilize them to your benefits.

Your Drawbacks: On the other side of your personality, loneliness can create a great void in your life. You know you grow in meaningful relationships or in co-dependency. If you can overcome your loneliness then you can do wonders; being lonely is the most difficult state of your being. At times, your resentment and ingratitude towards others creates problems for you.

Self-centredness could bring your morale to its lowest ebb. You could sometimes isolate yourself too much and too deeply. It can reduce your confidence to a very low level and then it will take very long to bring it back. Do not indulge in black magic or left-handed tantra to control others. Sometimes, you hold an inner resentment towards your friends and even those who have helped you.

NAKSHATRA MEDITATION TECHNIQUE

Find a peaceful and comfortable place in your house so you can sit there for 40 minutes uninterrupted for *nakshatra* meditation.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR UTTARA PHALGUNI NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down comfortably and keep your spine and neck erect. Close your eyes and start the exercise with exhaling. Start inhaling gradually and rhythmically and fill your lungs with air. Hold your breath for as many seconds as you can do. Bring your attention on the base of your spine, Mooladhara Chakra and you can start counting 1, 2, 3.... or any mantra depending on your choice. After this start exhaling and empty your lungs completely of air. Hold your breath as many seconds as you have done earlier and bring your attention on the top of your head,ie, the Crown Chakra. Again hold your breath and count 1, 2, 3... Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes and be ready for instructions of the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During this stage keep sitting in the same posture while your eyes are closed. Start breathing normally and drop counting also. Bring your attention on your Heart Chakra, centre of your ribs. You need to examine your body from top to bottom. Start examining from head to toe. First examine your hair then your skull from outside, go inside and watch your brain, its connection, ear from inside, the connection of nose, teeth, throat and the same way keep on examining your entire body internally. Human body quietly serves the humanity without demanding much. When you examine your body internally then you can know a lot more of your body and may develop a different understanding altogether. Keep on healing each and every part of your body with your pranic energy. If you do this exercise for few days then you will be able to notice small changes happening in your body then and there. Be ready for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): You are already sitting in the same posture and breathing normally and your eyes are closed. Bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra. During these 10 minutes, you need to know the emotional side of your being from childhood to the present stage. All of us know that past is not very relevant but at the same time all of us remain deeply connected with the past. It is very difficult to forget the bad events of past especially our failures or humiliation etc. Sometimes it is more difficult to forget the past if it was splendid in any way. The moot point is whether the past was great or miserable it does not serve much purpose in the present. Therefore it is very important for you to be clear of all those past events which are still haunting you in any form. During these 10 minutes very genuinely try to know which are those events or happening which still drag you into the same situation again and again. With deeper understanding and using your intelligence you can get rid of that negativity which exhausts your mind even now. Be ready for the next stage.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture while your eyes are closed and you breathe normally. Bring back your entire attention on the Heart Chakra. The Vedic deity of your *nakshatra* is Aryaman, the god of contracts and union. This *nakshatra* is bestowed with Chayani Shakti, power of accumulation through marriage or union. On the heavenly plane it is wealth gains from own family. On the worldly plane it is the wealth gain from ones partner. Overall it brings about the accumulation of wealth. The presiding deity of this *nakshatra* is Aryaman who is a very powerful guiding force and makes sure that you remain a winner and successful in all your endeavours. Aryaman is also considered one of the Sun. The Sun is the basic source of light, energy, knowledge who removes darkness as well as ignorance. That is why in all the ancient religions Sun was prayed to. Sun is also considered the soul of universe as well as you. You can imagine Sun near your heart and pray to

it. If you find difficulty to identify with the Sun then start connecting yourself with your soul. It will be one and the same thing. The moment you start connecting with the Sun or soul, your total concept of life and the universe will be different. Try to travel with the Sun in your imagination from the dawn to sunset and try to capture it at the time of dawn as well as when it is setting. Even if one can watch sunrise and sun set for 15 minutes in the morning and evening then one can get transformed. Do this *nakshatra* meditation daily and see the change that takes place.

During this *nakshatra* meditation, you need to work on your drawbacks which are resentment and ingratitude towards others. Another problem is of loneliness. Instead of loneliness work on being a loner, you will overcome your difficulties.

Hasta : (10° 0' — 23° 20' Virgo)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Hasta is the thirteenth asterism of the zodiac which extends from 160° 00' to 173° 20'. The entire *nakshatra* resides within the sign Virgo, ruled by Mercury. The symbol of Hasta is hand. One can locate it in the sky as a hand looks giving blessings to the mankind. The lunar mansion is governed by the Moon, the main receptacle of cosmic energy whereas the lord of sign Mercury operates as a link between the man and the divine. Mercury gets exalted here. Virgo and Mercury put together stands for clarity of thoughts, deeds and absolute concentration. The primary motivation of the asterism is *moksha*, liberation. Its basic attribute is *tamas*, inertia at both primary and secondary level, with *rajas* activity at a tertiary level. The ruling deity of the asterism Hasta is Saviter, the Sun god who is the reservoir of all generated forces in the universe.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The symbol of the asterism is Hasta or human hand. The hand is the most powerful instrument given to man which makes him

stand apart from the entire animal kingdom. The difference between animal and man is only of the grip. Man can use his grip the way he wants but no other animal has got this ability. It gives him prowess and enables him to stand any kind of confrontation. If man is self-reliant in all departments of life then the credit goes to hand and he knows how to use it in different situations. Saviter is the presiding deity of the asterism and in the form of Sun god who imparts creative and regenerative energy. With the support of this energy multi-faceted growth of life has taken place.

Under the influence of this *nakshatra*, the individual wants to bring many changes and keen to give new shape to his imagination all the time but he is constantly faced with external resistance therefore conflict and crisis become the main impediments. Hasta also represents duration, the time itself. All activities can fructify only in a time and space realm, whereas the consciousness crosses all the borders of time and space or for it time and space make no difference. On a worldly level field of action is determined and Hasta produces action in that field. Therefore action is directly related to the duration which is the combination of time and space. On the worldly level hand is used for personal gratification and if selfish motives take a centre stage then hand can become the worst enemy of the entire mankind. On the spiritual plane hands can be used in the form of *mudra*, yoga and meditation.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The *tamas*, inertia *gunas* operate at basic and secondary level whereas *rajas* attributes operate at tertiary level. As we are aware the symbol of *nakshatra* is Hasta meaning human hand. Generally *tamas* is understood by inertia, dullness, lack of knowledge and negativity. The attribute *tamas* or inertia, dullness cannot remain forever. After an interval or duration *tamas* will lead into action but that may not be a perfect action done with understanding or knowledge. When the action is initiated under

tamas attribute then action is governed by ignorance which ultimately leads towards knowledge or understanding. If in this reference we analyze the hand then half the activities of hand are related with *tamas* or negativity. This clearly indicates *tamas* also has an inbuilt action in it which may be full of impurities but movement must take place. *Tamas* attributes operates at two levels basic and secondary then at third stage it is rajsik. As they say practice makes a man perfect and with practice understanding also takes place and with practice one learn to discards negative action and follow the positive activities.

The other important feature of this *nakshatra* is its motivational force. The primary motivation of the asterism is *moksha* or liberation. Hand is the best possible instrument given by the nature to man and if he can use it correctly, with practice and passage of time it will help to set a journey towards liberation. *Gunas* play a very important role in the formation of universe as well as human being and *nakshatra* reveals different pattern of *gunas* under different asterisms.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Hasta-Moon-Mercury combination brings out an individual who is very keen to change the world, to give a new shape and keep growing. There is a tremendous urge inside you to march ahead without bothering about external resistance. The laws of paradoxical nature operate fully but you look for a paradigm shift. Difficulties and obstructions are faced at every level but this does not deter you to achieve the desired results. This combination also makes one self-reliant and one who can influence the energy pattern with his will and optimism. They approach life as a natural phenomenon and do not defer their plans because of various reasons.

You are mentally very strong and there is a keenness to express your creative intelligence in whatever you undertake. You are very clear about your thoughts right from the beginning which is why you work with utmost self-control to realize all

your dreams. You are quite sure of your abilities and go all out to achieve your goal. There is a tremendous regenerating power within you which is why you almost always help those who seek help. On a higher level of your existence, you are very keen to make a difference in the lives of mankind as a whole, rather than work on an individual.

Your Drawbacks: You may face hard times, difficulties, ill-health and constraints early in life. You can be over-critical, impatient and perturbed. At times, your merciless attitude could begin to tell on your relationships. Your tendency towards self-indulgence can be detrimental.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HASTA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a peaceful and comfortable place. Keep your spine and neck erect. Start the exercise with exhaling. After emptying the air from the lungs, start inhaling deeply, slowly and completely. Hold your breath for few seconds and bring your attention to the base of spine, the Mooladhara Chakra and count 1, 2, 3 ... Now start exhaling slowly and completely. Empty all the air from your lungs. Hold the breath for the same number of seconds as you have done earlier and bring your attention to the top of your head, the Crown Chakra and count 1, 2, 3 ... Do this exercise for 10 minutes sitting in the same posture. You will notice within few days that your body is free from all the toxins and you are feeling very light and relaxed.

Second Stage (10 minutes): You are already sitting in the posture but before you start the exercise of second stage you need to follow a few instructions.

Breathe normally, drop the mantra and bring your attention on the Heart Chakra situated at the centre of your ribs. Your eyes are closed and you are sitting in the same posture. Watch your body internally from head to toe and see its function which you might have not done earlier. Start looking your head from the

outside and gradually bring your attention inside the brain, see its connection with other parts of the body. The same way keep on watching your ears, eyes, nose, teeth, throat and same way go down gradually and very slowly. See the function of your spine and its connection because the entire body is functioning perfectly because of the perfect spine. The same way watch each and every organ of your body and try to know it from the anatomical point of view and heal the entire body.

If you do this exercise for a few days your entire body will be rejuvenated and you will know what is happening inside the smallest part of the body.

After 10 minutes bring your attention on the Heart Chakra, breathe normally and your eyes should remain closed.

Third Stage (10 minutes): While sitting in the same posture as earlier breathe normally. You need to know how your mind operates. All our connections of this world are due to our mind. As a matter of fact mind creates many worlds and gets entangled with them for the rest of life. Some world of the mind is very pleasant, energetic and man always remains enthusiast to visit that world again and again. There is another world within the realm of mind which is the source of pain, anxiety, tension and constant reminder of negativity. During these 10 minutes of your *nakshatra* meditation you need to clear your mind from all those events happening which uproot you from your present and entangle with themselves. These are the main impediments of your personal as well as future growth therefore these 10 minutes should be utilized to get rid of all those worlds which you have created unknowingly.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Sitting in the same posture breathe normally while your eyes should remain closed and bring all your attention at the Heart Chakra. As you are aware the presiding deity of your asterism is the creative form of the Sun god. It is known as a 'Hasta Sthapanya Agam Shakti' meaning

the power is the ability to gain whatever we are seeking and plays it in our hands. On the heavenly plane it is seeking of gains. On the worldly plane it is the process of gaining. On the whole everything is possible with the support of hand.

During this *nakshatra* meditation you can imagine the hand of a god or goddess. You might have seen this very picture of most of the gods and goddesses. You can even imagine the hand of Buddha or any other god which you prefer. Now you know the energy source of *nakshatra* is the divine hand. Everything on this earth is possible with that divine hand. Make a part and parcel of this divine hand of your *nakshatra* meditation technique. With your creative intelligence and devotion you will also become a part of this divinity and transformation will take place.

During this *nakshatra* meditation you also need to work on your drawbacks like impatience and self indulgence.

Chitra : (23° 20' Virgo — 6° 40' Libra)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Chitra is the fourteenth star of the zodiac. The asterism is divided equally in Virgo and Libra signs. It extends from 23° 20' to 30° 0' in Virgo and from 0° 0' to 6° 40' in Libra sign, ie, from 173° 20' to 186° 40' of the zodiac. Virgo sign is ruled by Mercury whereas Libra is governed by Venus. Chitra is known as the star of opportunities and represented by a single star, Spica and symbolizes as a bright pearl. Chitra means an image, a work of art, painting, picture etc. The ruling planet of asterism is Mars. Its primary motivation is *kama* or passion. *Tamas* or inertia is its attribute on all levels. The presiding deity of the asterism is Tvashtra, also known as Vishwakarma, the celestial architect of the universe.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Chitra is one of the most mystical *nakshatras.* The meaning of Chitra is brilliant, transparent and is also referred as a serpent. The

symbol of asterism is Pearl. Prime a facie it looks very attractive and alluring but it also has the potential of a serpent. The danger and wisdom operates at the same level which is why it is difficult to decipher easily. The Sanskrit word of Pearl is mukta which has its roots in *mukti* or *moksha*,. ie, liberation. Superficially, *moksha* or liberation looks very easy and everybody thinks that one day he will be liberated. But the real meaning of *moksha* is known only by yogis because they lead a life of severe austerity and put themselves through all kind of trial and turbulence before they be one with their god or get liberated.

The asterism is equally spread in Virgo as well as in Libra. Virgo is the sixth sign of the Kaal Purush (cosmic man) and denotes disease and opposition. Mercury is the lord of Virgo who operates at a mental plane and faces all kind of difficulties and constraints before it can cross the shore. Libra is the seventh sign and ruled by Venus. The constellation itself is ruled by Mars. The combination of Venus and Mars motivates the soul and it gets into worldly pleasures and absolute ignorance takes place. Tvashtra is the presiding deity of the universe and its job is to bring out the real image out of a rough and tough stone. As a sculpture it needs to cut and chip the stone which is definitely a painful task.

There is a small cosmic story attached with Tvashtra. Tvasthra's daughter Sangya was married to dazzling Sun and it was very difficult for her to tolerate the heat or effulgence of Sun therefore she approached her father, Tvashtra, the celestial architect. The story further reveals that Tvashtra reduced a lot of radiance of the Sun so that he could copulate easily with Sangya and live happily as a married couple. The story clearly indicates that one has to adapt according to the actual external conditions and selfishness should be discarded at any cost. Chitra means mirror and the purpose of mirror is that one should see one's true image in it.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

This is the first asterism where *tamas* attributes are operating at

all levels. When *tamas gunas* are operating in abundance then the ego has to go through a very difficult path and put itself into all kind of restrictions. Realization or understanding cannot take place until and unless ego goes through a radical change. The symbols of the asterism are pearl and serpent indicating the paradoxical situations. Pearl indicates involvement with materialism and when one gets indulged in it totally then he puts himself into a very dangerous situation and that is reflected by other symbol that is serpent. The job of Tvashtra, celestial architect is to cut down all those pieces of the object which are not letting the real image come out. The motivational force of the *nakshatra* is *kama*, the desire also leads the soul towards ignorance and *tamas* attributes are there to entangle it.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Chitra-Mars-Mercury combination suggests that the stage is set for trial and tribulations before an individual realizes ones goals. The inner force wants to break away with the outer crust, therefore, pain and trouble becomes a part and parcel of life. In this process, sometimes, an individual feels very lonely. This situation is similar to churning an ocean where the elixir of life cannot be obtained without much effort. Mysteries of life need to be demystified, only the real image can be perceived.

The Chitra-Mars-Venus combination suggests tremendous potential. Paradoxically, wisdom and danger are also synchronized in this *nakshatra*, which is why this asterism is known as being the most mystical. One has to go to the extreme and utilize all his potential to get desired results. The aspirant needs to discipline himself and focus his energy on one identified point, it is only then that the real goal could be perceived. Helplessness in an action always encounters you before you succeed. For people born under this combination, success is not achieved without paying a price.

You think like yogis to a certain extent. Yogis are aware of the fact that nothing exceptional can be achieved nor can one

liberate oneself from the mundane affairs without going through pain and difficulties. You also believe that the real nature of your being can be perceived only through severe austerities. Perhaps, this is the reason you do not mind taking on challenges of life with all your might. You are very honest, interested in intellectual pursuits and you work with the knowledge that if you utilize your energy in the right direction, nothing will be impossible. You go an extra mile to help people in areas where you see potential.

You work very hard to crystallize your spirit and energies towards the world for personal gains. Your total persona is highly motivated to achieve personal glorification. You can be focused and can cut yourself from all worldly pleasures to achieve your goals. Sometimes, outer surroundings do influence you, but you have the capability to come out unscathed. You are intensely passionate in most of your actions. As a matter of fact, you can be business-like and forego personal pleasures. You are compassionate towards others and willing to help anybody in distress. You are exceptionally kind and have a healing influence on others.

Your Drawbacks: One of your challenges revolves around a strong sexual urge which needs to be either understood or harnessed. Too much indulgence or being over-passionate could also bring about your downfall. At times, your temperament can also create a lot of problems for you. Self-centredness and an egoistic approach need to be curbed well in time.

You remain discontented and restless even after achieving a lot in life. Too much self-indulgence or self-centredness can also create problems with your personality. You should learn to organize your energy because destructive tendencies can take a heavy toll on you. You are very sensitive and tend to get upset easily.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHITRA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a comfortable posture and make sure you are not disturbed. Close your eyes and keep your

spine and neck erect. Start the exercise with exhaling. Now start inhaling slowly but completely. When inhaling is complete then hold your breath for few seconds. During this time bring your attention to the base of your spine, Mooladhara Chakra, the first chakra and recite a short mantra like Om. Start exhaling again, slowly and completely and empty the air from your lungs. Bring your attention on top of your head, the Crown Chakra, while holding your breath, recite the same mantra Om again. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes. There is no need to recite the mantra while you are inhaling or exhaling.

After doing this exercise for 10 minutes you will notice that most of the toxins have been thrown out of your body and you will feel light and relaxed. Wait for the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During this stage, breathe normally and drop the mantra also. Bring your attention on the Heart Chakra, ie, between the centre of ribs. Watch your body from head to toe gradually. To begin with start watching your hair, skull, internal connection of brain, head, ears, eyes, face, teeth, throat and the same way keep on going downwards. If you want to know more about your body and how different organs work then you can take the aid of any book on anatomy During the process of watching your body, keep on healing each and every organ of your body with your pranic healing. If any part of your body troubles you then you can heal it more. For an instance if your knee troubles you then you can focus on your knee during this phase of meditation and heal it at the same time. Within a few days you will notice that your body is more alive, vibrant and trouble free. Wait for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture while breathing normally and bring your attention back on your Heart Chakra. Make sure your eyes remain closed throughout this *nakshatra* meditation technique. During these 10 minutes you need to work on the emotional side of your being. Emotional

quotient is more important than IQ. IQ indicates your level of intelligence and that is primarily based on your retentive memory. However, EQ or emotional quotient or equilibrium depends how you strongly manage the shocks of life because life gives many shocks to a person who however has to move ahead with more confidence and understanding. These 10 minutes should be devoted on your emotional intelligence. Ultimately it is your emotional intelligence which helps you leave the past behind and be positive about the future by using your emotions in the best possible way in the present.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): While sitting in the same posture bring back your awareness on your Heart Chakra and keep on breathing normally. Your eyes should be closed. As you are aware the ruling deity of your *nakshatra* is Tvashtra, the cosmic crafts man. Chitra has been bestowed with 'Punya Chayani Shakti'. Its power is able to accumulate merit in life. On the heavenly plane it is the law and on the worldly plane it is the truth. You can use this *shakti* in two ways. To begin with imagine there is a deity called Tvashtra or celestial architect who is capable of creating the entire world. With such a powerful energy he can also give you a proper and beautiful shape. Whatsoever your drawbacks are if you bow down to him then he will whole-heartedly help you to remove all those impediments. If you find difficult to do that way then you can create a witness within yourself, who is not just watching you but has the power for corrective measure on you. Whatsoever problems or difficulty you have or you face in life, if you make him your craftsman then he will transform you with his powerful energy.

During this *nakshatra* meditation technique you need to work on your arrogance, indulgence and your speech.

Swati : (6° 40' — 20° 00' Libra)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Swati is the fifteenth asterism of the zodiac which extends from

186° 40' to 200° 0' and completely resides within the sign Libra, the balance, ruled by Venus. It is spotted by Arcturus, the brightest single star in the constellation Bootis. The meaning of Swati is the Sword which indicates a strong desire of dominance. The sign Libra is ruled by planet Venus and denotes that material and spiritual forces are evenly posed. Swati represents that influence with some differences. This is being highlighted by the rulership of asterism by Rahu. The primary motivation of the asterism is Arth, focused activity. Its basic and secondary attribute is *tamas*, with *sattva* at tertiary level. The presiding deity of the asterism is vayu, the god of wind or life breath. Vayu or air is the vital life force of the universe. The symbol of the asterism is Coral.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

A lot of mystery is attached with the Coral because it has many characteristics within itself. It is believed that it produces its off spring on its own. This also indicates of an evolutionary stage when outer forces are not required because evolution was happening on its own. Although coral looks like a solid mass but essentially not a marine creature, actually it is a sea product. Due to marine conditions it becomes hard and solid. At the same time coral has a strong psychic impact on the people who experienced it. Although it is affected by its marine conditions, it has an inbuilt quality of creating its own environment. The same is true for human beings also, they get influenced by surroundings but have the ability to change themselves suddenly.

Swati is a primordial stage of evolution when evolution was happening with a single cell or asexual. There are many ancient stories where a rishi could produce off springs by his thought, imagination, speech, ear, nose, sweat etc. As a matter of fact reproduction activities started happening under Swati's influence in Libra. The deity of the asterism is Vayu, however there are two more important forces agni (fire), Surya (the Sun) and Vayu, the trinity gods who are responsible to the formation

of the material world. The sign Libra plays a very important role in the cosmic world. Being the seventh sign of the zodiac which represents balance of the universe plays a very important role in the planetary hierarchy. Saturn becomes exalted here indicating materialism is taking a centre stage. The atmic planet Sun gets debiliated which indicates that atmic or spiritual forces are at the lower ebb. Therefore self-gratification starts taking deep roots over here and ego becomes self-centered. Rahu, the lord of *nakshatra* plays a very important role because internally he seeks spirituality but externally gets entangled with materialism. Here lies the importance of balance, Libra. If that can be established then one can proceed towards spirituality easily.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

It is *tamas* at basic and secondary level with *sattva* at tertiary level. The symbol of the asterism is coral which is quite fascinating with its origin. Coral is the hard calcareous skeleton secreted by certain marine animals but not a marine creature as such but known as a product of the sea. Coral looks very hard but when it is reshaped then it has a beauty of its own. Swati is ruled by planet Rahu who is known for its mysterious qualities. Rahu had to cut himself into two in the bargain of getting nectar during the time of the ocean churning. The deity of the asterism is Vayu (air) when purified through the process of *pranayam* (yogic kriya) then the person can be elevated to a spiritual kingdom. If we see the pattern of *gunas* of this *nakshatra* then all the symbology finds itself in a place. At the basic and secondary level it is full of *tamas* attribute which indicates a lot of efforts are required only one can succeed uplifting oneself on the higher plane. At the tertiary level *sattva guna* predominates which clearly indicates that if genuine efforts are made constantly then one can tarnish ego or ignorance to a great extent.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Swati-Rahu-Venus combination provides

an inherent force to change the surrounding environment in a dramatic way. Their inner force is so intense that it has the ability to bring a paradigm shift in their lives. Persons born under this sign are extremely passionate and plan their moves by utilizing their intellect to the optimum. Your actions are directed towards personal gains because self-gratification is the most motivating point in your life. Your total personality is engrossed in every action that you pursue. If you go through any pain or deprivation, you do not get bogged down because of the strong belief that when the time of rewards shall come, these things will not matter at all. You seek pleasure in work but are not pleasure seekers.

You work very hard to crystallize your spirit and energies towards the world for personal gains. Your total persona is highly motivated to achieve personal glorification. You can be focused and can cut yourself from all worldly pleasures to achieve your goals. Sometimes, outer surroundings do influence you, but you have the capability to come out unscathed. You are intensely passionate in most of your actions. As a matter of fact, you are businesslike and forego personal pleasures. You are compassionate towards others and willing to help anybody in distress. You are exceptionally kind and have a healing influence on others.

Your Drawbacks: You remain discontented and restless even after achieving a lot in life. Too much self-indulgence or self-centredness can also create problems with your personality. You should learn to organize your energy because destructive tendencies can take a heavy toll on you. You are very sensitive and tend to get upset easily.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SWATI NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a comfortable and relaxed posture. Keep your spine and neck erect. Start the exercise by exhaling. After you have emptied your lungs start inhaling

slowly, systematically and completely. Hold your breath as long as you can do easily. Bring your attention on the base of your spine, Mooladhara Chakra, the first chakra and count 1, 2, 3 ... After sometime, start exhaling slowly and completely. Hold your breath for the same number of seconds as you have done earlier. Hold your breath and bring your attention on the top of your head, the crown chakra and count 1, 2, 3 ... Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes while sitting in the same posture and your eyes are closed. You will notice that with your breathing exercise a lot of toxin of the body has come out and you are feeling light, more relaxed and energetic. Be ready for the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During this stage just breath normally, stop counting also and bring your attention on the Heart Chakra located in the middle of the ribs. These 10 minutes should be invested on understanding of your body's internal mechanism. Start this exercise from head to toe. In the beginning start watching your head from the outside and gradually look inside with your mental eye, your brain, its cell and connection and gradually keep on going down while realizing each and every organ of your body. If you take the help of any elementary anatomical book then you can understand the entire body more easily. While imagining your body keep on healing each and every part of it with your pranic healing. If any part of your body is a source of constant trouble then heal it more. Within few days of this *nakshatra* meditation technique you will know more about your body and your mind will get attuned with the entire body gradually. With your pranic energy you will learn how to make it more energetic, strong and vibrant.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture and make sure your eyes should remain closed throughout the *nakshatra* meditation. Bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra and keep on breathing normally. During these 10

minutes you need to work on your emotional intelligence. The theory of emotional intelligence indicates that whatsoever we do in this world we get influenced as well as one can get attached with the same things or events. All these events have some influence on our psyche. There are some incidents with which mind can cope then and there and they do not make any images. However that is not true for everything. There are certain things or events which affect us very deeply and it is very difficult to get rid of them easily.

During these 10 minutes remember those events and their cause and effect and try to overcome those hassles once for all. If your mind is free from past problems and future expectations then you can bring it in the present without its wavering. When mind operates totally in present then its quality is immense.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): While sitting in the same posture, breathing normally, you need to bring your attention back on your Heart Chakra. Your eyes should remain closed. Your *nakshatra* Swati is ruled by Vayu, the god of air or wind. It is blessed with a 'Pradhvamsa Shakti' meaning it gives power to scatter like the wind. On the heavenly plane it is moving in various directions and on the worldly plane it is change of form. Overall it has a potential of transformation.

Your entire attention is on your Heart Chakra and you know that the deity of your asterism is Vayu, the god of wind. Start imagining the different forms of wind. Initially it is in waves then spreading gradually and fully available throughout the universe. Wind has a power which can be very devastating also. When it takes a violent form then everything which comes its way it uprooted Sometimes it looks like there is no air in the atmosphere and one starts feeling suffocated. Likewise air has many forms. But the basic energy of air is life. It is a life force. In your case it is a life transforming force. It is your deity and if you be one with it then it is fully capable of transforming your life.

During this *nakshatra* meditation you need to work on your

drawback like self-indulgence, destructive and over-sensitivity.

Vishakha : (20° 00' Libra — 3° 20' Scorpio)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Vishakha is the sixteenth asterism of the zodiac which extends from 200° 00' to 213° 20'. Most of the *nakshatra* resides in the constellation of Libra and consists of four stars making a shape of scales which extends towards the sign of Scorpio. First three quarters of *nakshatra* falls in Libra ruled by Venus and the last quarter lies in sign Scorpio ruled by Mars. The asterism is ruled by benevolent planet Jupiter. Its primary motivation is dharma or principle. Its basic attribute is *tamas*, inertia while *sattva*, harmony at secondary and it is *rajas*, activity at tertiary level. This is the only asterism of the zodiac which has two Vedic deities — they are Indra, the lord of gods and Agni, the god of fire. The two symbols are assigned to this *nakshatra*, one is the potter's wheel and the second is an archway.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The meaning of Vishakha word is 'readiness', getting prepared to get into action. Vishakha is capable of total transformation. At this stage the individual is looking forward to discover his hidden qualities. There is an urgent need to make the necessary changes to achieve something new altogether. The divinity starts taking place under this asterism. The individual starts realizing with this contentment within himself and he looks for answers from higher being.

The symbol of the asterism, potter's wheel is very relevant in this regard. Potter's wheel moves on the centre of axis. The clay is put on this very axis. The shape of the pot depends on the expert and whatever shape the expert wants the clay does not resist and follows suit. At this stage of Vishakha the soul is in a state of readiness and if right kind of environment is created then the real shape can come out of nothingness. Due to influence of divine will there is an urge to explore one's inner

self. Sometimes if soul is governed by illusions, then it takes a different route of pleasure and enjoyment. If an individual is not satisfied with his environment and takes a negative route on impulse then it leads to infidelity or getting involved in sensuous pleasures. This invariably happens due to reactionary attitude rather than the real need of indulging in this sort of activity. There is a sense of insecurity, unhappiness, dryness which leads the person to seek shelter in sensuous activities. This sort of complexity is also visible under the influence of Vishakha.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Vishakha is the only *nakshatra* of the zodiac who has been associated with two powerful deities. One is Indra, the illuminated mind, the lord of gods. Second is Agni, the god of fire. It is *tamas*, inertia at the primary level, with *sattva*, purity at secondary and *rajas*, action at the tertiary level. The symbol of asterism is potter's wheel.

The pattern of attributes of this *nakshatra* follows as such: *tamas*, *sattva* and *rajas*. The symbol of *nakshatra* is potter's wheel which indicates that when the clay is put on the axis then it is in a state of inertia, *tamas* which does not resist for the transformation. It entirely depends on the expert who is working on this clay to make it a pot. Pot indicates perfection and the attribute of this *nakshatra* at second stage is *sattva*. However at a tertiary level the attribute of *nakshatra* is *rajas* or activity which indicates that it will depend on the individual how he wants to use this transformation. Since *rajas* attributes are predominating at the tertiary level it also indicates that action may lead to too much involvement or indulgence which is also the danger of this *nakshatra* which we have seen earlier. At the same time there are two powerful deities, one is Indra who rules over mind and other is Agni or fire. Both these deities are willing to help the individual if he really wants to transform his personality. Vishakha provides a tremendous opportunity for self-formation.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Vishakha-Jupiter-Venus combination stands for transformation. Vishakha creates an environment for the native to look inside to discover the source that lies within. A unique urge arises to change the course of things, to accomplish something totally unknown. There is a bit of discontentment which is heightened with the existence of life and the person works very hard to transform his surroundings. Such a person suddenly becomes very keen to explore his inner self and emerge with the real answers to make a difference.

The Vishakha-Jupiter-Mars combination denotes that one who grows slowly bears the sweetest fruit once ripened with time and age. People with this combination are imbibed with great strength, force and potential energy to influence and transform existence around them. They are full of faith, hope, and are enthusiastic about the future. They believe in themselves and achieve whatever they desire in life. They do not mind going through the process of pain and tribulation if the desired target could be achieved one day. They plan very systematically and put all their energy to see their goals turn into reality. Those born under this combination are courageous, confident and do not lose sight till they reach the goal.

One can depict you as a potter who is very keen to give a desired shape to the pot. In this case, you play both the roles — of the potter and the pot. You are willing to make changes in your behaviour and attitude to get the desired results once you have made up your mind. To an extent, you act like a yogi who is ready to go through all the penance if enlightenment is assured. Being exceptionally kind and generous, you are keen to help those who you feel are not able to find their path.

You are very hard right from the beginning and bring yourself to the stage of readiness from where real action of life can take place. You are very attentive and ready to grab the opportunity whenever it comes your way. You could be easily depicted as an archer who focuses all his energy on the target.

Perhaps, there is a keen desire in you to transform or make a paradigm shift in this life. If you feel that you need to change your attitude, understanding and behaviour to achieve your goal, then you will leave no stone unturned. You always help those who follow you or accept your dominance.

Your Drawbacks: You are very temperamental and sometimes it gets the better of you. Pursuing wrong agendas can take you off your track and lead to unnecessary delays. Try not to be dictatorial in nature and avoid quarrels as much as you can.

Sometimes, you want to fulfill too many ambitions which creates a lot of problems in life. Do not be envious and jealous of other's success. Sometimes, your social networking is very poor and you may suffer on this account. Your temperament and strong sexual appetite can put your life out of gear.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VISHAKHA NAKSHATRA

Find a comfortable and peaceful place where you can sit 40 minutes everyday to practice *nakshatra* meditation.

First Stage (10 minutes): To begin with sit down in a comfortable posture, keep your spine and neck erect. Start your exercise with exhaling. Now start inhaling slowly and completely and fill your lungs with air. Hold the breath as long as you can easily. Bring the attention at the base of your spine, Mooladhara Chakra and recite any mantra, for example, say Om. Now exhale slowly and completely and empty your lungs of air. Hold the breath again for as many seconds as you have done earlier and recite the mantra Om and bring the attention on the top of your head, ie, the Crown Chakra. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes, you will notice after few days that most of the toxins of your body have come out and your body is feeling more light, happy and relaxed. Another change you will notice that your mind is not wavering as it used to do.

Second Stage (10 minutes): During this stage start breathing normally and stop reciting the mantra. Keep sitting in the same posture with eyes closed and your attention should be on the Heart Chakra which is located at the centre of your ribs. During these 10 minutes you need to pay attention to your body and heal it with your pranic energy. Start watching your body, externally as well as internally with your mental eye. This exercise should be done very slowly from head to toe, paying your full attention on each and every part of your body. In this process you can closely watch your brain, the internal connection of eyes, nose, throat and gradually go upto your toes. While you are watching different organs of your body keep on healing them with your pranic energy. You will notice within a few days that your body is responding a lot more to you and you can know the small changes happening in any part of your body. If you have a chronic problem then you can pay more attention on that part and heal it with your pranic energy. You will be able to rejuvenate your body within few days of practice.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture, while your eyes are closed and your attention is on the Heart Chakra. You need to invest these 10 minutes on your mental as well as emotional faculties. During this life we face a lot of emotional traumas, sometimes circumstantially and sometimes it could be our own doing also. In both the situations these kinds of events create a mental blockade and those events become an impediment in spiritual growth. Sometimes it is very difficult to cope with those situations or people if we confront them suddenly. During these 10 minutes you need to work on the emotional side of your being which has been tormented due to certain unavoidable circumstances. Free your mind from all bondages of past and be ready for a real meditation.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Your *nakshatra* Vishakha is ruled by two deities Indra and Agni. They represent the powers of heat

and lightening in the atmosphere. It is bestowed with 'Vyapana Shakti', which gives power to achieve many and various fruits in life. On the heavenly plane it is cultivation and on the worldly plane it is harvest. Overall it gives the fruit of the harvest.

During this *nakshatra* meditation technique you can create an image of a fire in front of your heart. Imagine the fire in its various forms. The devastating fire of jungle which can burn any object that comes its way. When it cools down then it converts into heat and the primary basis of man's survival because fire is vastly used in cooking. The same fire is use in yagyas, havan, it can purify the atmosphere. A small lamp burning in the temple engulfs the entire purity of atmosphere. The same fire can transform you. The other deity of this *nakshatra* is Indra also known as an illuminated mind. This mind is capable of purifying you entirely.

You need to work on your drawbacks like envy, jealousy, social networking and sex related hassles.

Anuradha : (3° 20' — 16° 40' Scorpio)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Anuradha is the seventeenth *nakshatra* of the zodiac which extends from 213° 20' to 226° 40' of the zodiac in the sign of Scorpio ruled by Mars. It consists of three stars in the body of Scorpio. In the same constellation another star Alpha Centauri also lies that is the closest star of our solar system. The lord of the asterism is Saturn whereas the lord of sign is Mars. Both the planets belong to opposite poles and when they come together then the churning of an individual is bound to happen. The same phenomenon can be seen when we notice the attributes of the asterism. It is *tamas*, inertia, negativity at basic and tertiary level, however it is *sattva* at the secondary level. In other words, *sattva*, truth and harmony attribute is hemmed between *tamas*. The symbol of Anuradha is Lotus and presiding deity of *nakshatra* is Mitra, the deity of friendliness and cooperation.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Great mystery is attached with the symbol of Anuradha which is Lotus. The Sanskrit meaning of Lotus is Padma. The seed of lotus is sowed in the mud therefore its initial growth takes place in the mud only which indicates the individual's total involvement with materialism. The manifestation of the seed of lotus happens at various levels. It takes root in the mud which represents total ignorance. Its stems grow in water and water represents the emotional side of a person. It gets attracted by the sun rays and starts blossoming on the surface of the water. This also represents the growth pattern of a soul. The other meaning of Padma refers to sexual intercourse. Another meaning of Padma is Laxmi, the consort of Vishnu, who follows Lord Krishna in the form of Radha. According to mythological story the macro cosmic lotus rises from the navel of Vishnu and on which Brahma, the creator of cosmos was seated. Lotus also refers to the entire process of the creation.

Another meaning of Anuradha asterism is the 'Smaller Radha' or one who follows Radha. Radha is the beloved of Lord Krishna who was deeply attached to him. The story of Radha is also very significant. She was the consort of Lord Krishna but due to her circumstances she longed more that she lived with Krishna. Although both were not leaving an opportunity to be together when they get chance but the constant struggle was there. It looks as soul is longing to meet the divine but circumstances are creating the problem to do so. The same pattern can be seen from the opposite lordship of *nakshatra*, Saturn and sign lord, Mars. The deity of *nakshatra* is Mitra who is eternally friendly and cooperative towards man. According to Rig Veda, there are two powerful deities, one is Varun, light of the night. Mitra is light of the day which begins with the dawn. The Atharva Veda says whatever light was concealed by the Varun in the night, Mitra brings it back with the dawn. The night represents the ignorance of the soul due to the influence of Maya and with the dawn divinity takes over.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The *tamas*, inertia attributes are more active in this *nakshatra*. *Tamas gunas* are operating at basic and tertiary levels whereas *sattva* attributes are helmed in between. The same pattern can be seen with the lordship of *nakshatra* and sign lord. The lord of *nakshatra* is Saturn and sign lord is Mars. Saturn is considered a cold planet where Mars is the fiery one. Both the planets are of opposite nature and when they are together then churning is bound to happen. Saturn essentially is a spiritual planet and ultimately it helps the native to overcome the inertia and know the ultimate truth. Scorpio is a very mysterious sign. It is deeply connected with the mystery of this world. The eighth house of the zodiac ie, Scorpio is directly related to death, life after death and all the mysteries attached with the hidden or occult world are deeply connected with this sign. Saturn's lordship of the *nakshatra* helps the individual to overcome all these miseries and learn the hidden knowledge. Scorpio is also connected with the Kundalini Shakti and Kundlini Shakti lies at the base of spine in a dormant fashion as a coiled snake. In this sense the opposite forces bring out the hidden meaning of life under this asterism.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Anuradha-Saturn-Mars combination creates paradoxical situation. As Mars and Saturn are inimical to each other, one is considered fiery and the other is cold by nature. Therefore, inherent conflicts remain mostly at the psychological level where a person has to understand the dark and bright side of his being and make timely adjustments. Ego, ignorance, jealousy and attachment start losing connectedness with the inner self once you learn to synchronize both the natures. Once this phenomenon occurs, the person becomes open and has empathy and compassion for one and all. No doubt, the initial struggle remains there, but once flowers begin to blossom, fragrance and beauty can engulf the entire world.

You have a great ability to create and maintain good relationships without losing your focus. Once you understand your latent power, you can do wonders with this unused energy. You have the ability to overcome the difficulties which come your way. Many times, it seems, especially to your close ones, that you have given up and lost the battle. But you are one of those who can lose at the initial level to achieve final victory. You help people without them coming to know that you are helping because you believe that dignity and honour should be maintained.

Your Drawbacks: There are certain issues which need to be addressed in earnest otherwise they can cause your downfall. Sometimes, rigidity in thoughts and vehement jealousy can create a lot of problems for you. You are low on tolerance and anger takes a centre stage. Selfish motives can bring you a bad name.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANURADHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a place where you are relaxed and comfortable. Keep your spine and neck erect and close your eyes. Start the exercise with exhaling. After emptying your lungs, inhale slowly and rhythmically. Hold your breath for a while and bring your attention to the base of your spine and recite the mantra Om. During this time you are holding your breath. Make sure you are reciting this mantra within your mind not by uttering it. Start exhaling slowly and rhythmically and empty your lungs completely. Hold your breath at this stage of the same duration as you have done it earlier. Recite the mantra Om again. Do this exercise for 10 minutes.

After doing this exercise for few days you will notice that this breathing technique has already thrown out a lot of toxins from your body and your body is feeling relaxed, light and more vibrant.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed. Start breathing normally, stop reciting the

mantra and bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra, ie, between the centre of ribs. During these 10 minutes you need to understand each and every organ of your body. This you can do it by watching your body from head to toe. Start this exercise by watching your hair, then its connection with the root on the skull and then gradually go inside your brain and try to understand and know more about it. The same way keep on going down and watch your heart and its functions, its connectivity with the body and same way try to know as much as you can know about your body. This exercise should be done mentally. With the passage of few days you will connect very well with all parts of your body. You might have not noticed but there is a tremendous healing energy within you. If you start healing each and every part of your body then you will be amazed to know that your body is more vibrant and rejuvenating.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture while breathing normally and bring your attention on the Heart Chakra with your eyes closed. You need to work on the emotional side of your personality. If you find out any drawbacks with your personality which are related to the family, social or personal matters then you need to overcome all those impediments during these 10 minutes. The point is that your mind should be free from all the emotional burdens which keep on bothering you from time to time. If you think there are some unresolved emotional issues with you then solve them with this *nakshatra* meditation technique. After practicing few days your mind will be clear from all emotional debts of the past.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): While sitting in the same posture breathe normally. Now bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra and keep your eyes closed. Your Anuradha *nakshatra* is ruled by Mitra, the divine friend. It is blessed with 'Radhana Shakti', which gives the power of worship. On the heavenly plane it is ascension and on the worldly planet it is descension.

All put together it denotes honour and abundance as a gain. The presiding deity of this *nakshatra* is Mitra, a divine friend. It may be difficult for you to imagine Mitra as a divine friend. However you can assume any god of your liking as a friend. God is already a divine force therefore connecting with him will not be a problem. During these 10 minutes keep the image of your god in front of your heart and try to be friendly with him. All the gods are equally powerful and they are the cosmic force of the entire universe. Their energy is capable of transforming anybody on this earth. When you gradually attune with the god of your liking and make him your best divine friend then nothing will remain impossible for you.

You can overcome your drawback with this *nakshatra* meditation technique. Your drawbacks are rigidity, jealousy and lack of tolerance.

Jyeshtha : (16° 40' — 30° 0' Scorpio)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Jyeshtha is the eighteenth *nakshatra* of the zodiac which extends from 226° 40' to 240° 0' of the zodiac in Scorpio ruled by Mars. The three stars forming the *nakshatra* look like an umbrella or an ear ring. These are also the symbols of the asterism. The prime star is the brilliant red star at the heart of Scorpion Antares. The ruling planet of the *nakshatra* is Mercury. *Tamas* is the basic attribute of the *nakshatra* but *sattva* flows at the secondary and tertiary levels. The primary motivation of *nakshatra* is arth directed activities. The presiding deity of the asterism is Indra, the king of gods. The meaning of jyeshtha is eldest or the senior most. However, here jyeshtha represents elder sister or the middle finger of the hand. Elder sister is given the utmost honour and respect in the family and she is considered next to mother. Asterism functions like a female angel who is protecting and guiding the growth and development of our children on the earth. *Pranayam* is a yogic kriya and middle finger is used to do this exercise with perfection.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Indra, the king of gods has attained a lot of importance in Puranic stories because he controls all the pleasures of life. He has achieved all this power after performing great austerity and penance. Indra is a very powerful king of gods because he owns the Sudarshan Chakra, the invincible disc which can consume the world instantly, remains balanced on his fore finger. It was a reward of great sacrifice. He annihilated many demons with this disc. This circulatory disc also resembles the symbols of umbrella and ear ring. Jyeshtha has also earned a lot of status due to its symbols ear ring and umbrella.

In the ancient civilizations of many countries including India, the kings who have attained the spiritual power were given special ring to recognize their efforts in the spiritual world. Those who have attained noble status in the society were given umbrella as a symbol in those times. At this stage the soul qualifies itself to embark upon in a new direction. An individual starts transforming at this stage. One needs to withstand a lot of psychological upheaval before one starts becoming one with the spiritual energies. Mercury is the lord of *nakshatra* which indicates that mental capabilities have to increase immensely to know the real power of the spiritual energies. Indra, the presiding deity of the *nakshatra* also denotes illuminated mind.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Gunas pattern has become just reverse at this stage of jyeshtha. It is *tamas*, inertia operating at the basic level and there is abundance of *sattva*, lightness and harmony at secondary and tertiary levels. While discussing these nine asterisms from Magha to Jyeshtha we had observed that the basic attribute of all these *nakshatras* is *tamas*, inertia or dullness. This is the last *nakshatra* of this group. From here onward there is a change in the pattern. Basic attribute has to be *tamas* but abundance of *sattva* is there to take care of an individual. At jyeshtha we notice that the first protector is the eldest sister who is there to protect as a mother. The other symbol

of the asterism is middle finger which helps the individual to rectify his breathing pattern with *pranayam* technique. When one is marching towards the path of spiritualism then there are many social rewards which recognize his efforts in the spiritual field by offering him ear ring or an umbrella. The presiding deity of the asterism is Indra who helps the individual to control his senses and illuminate the mind with spiritual awakening.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths

The Jyeshtha-Mercury-Mars combination indicates an earnest desire for prowess, freedom, but there is also fear that exists at a subconscious level. The person works to achieve seniority as compared to others, becomes the eldest in many ways and looks for absolute power and respect. He conceives himself to be glorious, courageous, powerful and daring. He has the knack and the power to rise and become invincible and wants to remain courageous in the midst of crisis. At times, he does not mind being cunning, if desired ends are achieved. In a nutshell, we can say a drop has the dream to become an ocean.

You have a keen desire to be noble as well as aristocratic in the social hierarchy. You are full of energy and use your special latent faculty for growth and development. You work at an inner level and evolve yourself to achieve great heights in life. However, materialism never leaves you. You firmly believe that a solid bank balance is very important if one wants to understand proper meditation. You keep a perfect balance between have and have-nots. You belong to the first category where you want everything in abundance and there is no room for scarcity. Yet, you have love, affection and kindness towards the have-nots and are always willing to help them to the best of your ability. You are always ready to move on and experience a deeper level of existence.

Your Drawbacks: There is a constant inner conflict going on in you about your self-image and self-esteem. Your secretive and

hypocritic nature will bring your downfall. You demand total surrender from your friends and well-wishers. Do not give too much importance to materialism. You need to check your irritable nature, arrogance, pride and ego. Self-discipline could be the best policy for you.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR JYESHTHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a posture which makes you absolutely peaceful and comfortable. Close your eyes, keep your spine and neck erect. Start the exercise with exhaling. Now inhale slowly and gradually and fill your lungs with air. Hold your breath as long as you can do easily and recite the mantra Om mentally. After sometime start exhaling and free your lungs from air. Hold the breath the same number of seconds and recite the mantra Om again. Do this exercise for the next 10 minutes. With this exercise you will notice within few days that a lot of toxin from your body has come out and you are feeling more fresh, relaxed and rejuvenating.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed. Breathe normally and drop the mantra also. Bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra which is located at the center of your ribs. You need to spend these 10 minutes on knowing, watching and understanding your body. Watch your body from head to toe slowly and systematically. To begin with know the outer surface of your head then watch your brain internally , see the internal connection of ears, eyes, nose, teeth likewise. Keep on observing your body thoroughly. While watching your body you need to heal each and every part of your body with pranic energy. If any part of your body is troublesome then heal it more. It is a very powerful tool. If you do it for few days you will be able to know a lot more about your body and shall be able to connect with it. You will be able to heal your body at any given moment with your pranic energy.

Third Stage (10 minutes): While sitting in the same posture, keep on breathing normally and bring back your attention on the Heart Chakra. Your eyes should remain closed. During these 10 minutes you need to understand the emotional side of your personality. In this life we come across many situations. Some of them can be resolved then and there but others get deep-rooted in our system and become a source of pain, anxiety, tension and sometimes disturbances also. You need to find out which are these issues are still unresolved and have gone deep into your subconscious mind but which can surface any time given the right environment. With this *nakshatra* meditation technique you need to remove all those incidents from your mind and make it pure, light and clean as a mirror.

If you can bring your mind at this level then it will help you to go deep into your meditation.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed and attention focused on the Heart Chakra. Be ready for the *nakshatra* meditation technique. The presiding deity of your *nakshatra* is Indra, king of gods. It is bestowed with 'Arohana Shakti'. It has the power to rise and conquer and gain courage in the battle. On the heavenly plane it is an attack and on the worldly plane it is a defence. All these energies make him a great hero. Your power is Arohana Shakti which also means that the power which lies inside you. If you can pray to that power within you then it will help you to achieve anything in life. However if you find it difficult to identify with your inner power then you can imagine any god of your liking and be one with that power during this *nakshatra* meditation. One day this divine energy will uplift you and whatever you want in this world you shall be able to achieve it very easily.

You need to work out on your drawbacks with the help of this *nakshatra* meditation technique. Sometimes you are secretive and hypocritic which brings your downfall. You also need to work on your conflicts, arrogance, pride and ego.

CHAPTER NINE

Nakshatra Meditation Technique – III

Heal Yourself with Pranic Energy

Healing is a natural phenomenon and a great gift of nature to mankind. When there is a small cut on the finger blood rushes to that area to heal it. The role of medicine is to remove the disease or kill the virus so that the body automatically recovers. Primarily it is based on the principle that the body has a self-healing mechanism. It is a gift of nature without which human beings would not have survived for so long: evolving from the caveman to the modern man.

We have often used the word *pranic* healing using the *nakshatra* meditation technique. *Pranic* energy is also known as life force which has the capacity to transform the entire body by taking it from a negative level to a positive level. *Pranic* energy is based on two fundamental principles of self-recovery and *prana* which indicates that the body is capable of healing itself.

Life force of *prana* is a must because the existence of body depends on *prana* and when this principle is applied correctly it yields results. The body is of two types one is visible: the physical and the other is invisible: the energy body. Invisible energy body is also known as human aura or the bioplasmic body. By the invention of Kirlian camera one can take a

photograph of the human aura which is made of different colours. One can take a photograph, see the colour of the aura and that decides the disease. The invisible body is 4 to 5 inches above the physical body. Disease invariably appears in the invisible body and then gradually sets in the physical body. When one meditates on his *pranic* energy then he starts healing the physical body, and the disease starts disappearing from his invisible body also; thus he cleans his aura.

If one can use his *pranic* energy in curing his body continuously using the *nakshatra* meditation techniques then he can free himself from all kinds of diseases. In case disease has set in a body or a particular part of a body, even then it can be cured with *pranic* energy. Of late science has also found out that if someone's wrist is paining or is problematic and one goes into deep meditation and starts healing his wrist with the help of pranic energy then the part of brain cells that control the wrist start curing the wrist. This works on the principle of visualization technique. Athletes often use this technique; when they want to be a winner. They visualize the entire scene where they have to win; when the race or event takes place then the athelete actually wins it easily.

All of us are blessed with *pranic* energy and this is the master key which can be utilized to heal oneself.

Mula : (0° 00' — 13° 20')

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Mula is the nineteenth *nakshatra* of the zodiac which extends from 240° 00' to 253° 20' of the zodiac and completely resides in Sagittarius ruled by Jupiter. The sign has the capacity to make the paradigm shift from animal man to spiritual being. The meaning of the word mula is root, the lowest edge. It is also portrayed as the tail of a lion, located in a group of stars that forms the Scorpion tail. The asterism is ruled by a shadowy planet, Ketu which is considered a spiritual planet. Mula marks the point where the galactic centre intersects the zodiac, which

further emphasizes its spiritual influence. Mula is also assigned two symbols, one is an elephant's goad and the other a lion's tail which plays an important role in the path of spiritualism. The ruling deity of mula is Niritti, the goddess of destruction. Niritti also means disaster and is capable of destroying anything which is creating problems in the path of realizing the real nature of the soul. Niritti is also depicted as Goddess Kali who is capable of destroying ignorance. The basic attribute is *sattva*, lightness with *rajas*, action at secondary and tertiary level. The primary motivation of mula is *kama* or desire.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Mula means root of spiritual awakening but that cannot happen till ignorance is not destroyed completely. The accumulated karmic past has to be destroyed completely only then one can see the real self or the soul. That is why mula is considered quite a deadly one. The presiding deity Niritti, the goddess of death and destruction personifies the same.

It is believed that Ravana and Kansa, two deadly kings of ancient times were born in Mula *nakshatra*. Ravana was a very learned king who was well-versed in scriptures and Vedic rituals. He was extremely powerful and overpowered many gods. It is also mentioned in ancient literature that Agni, the fire god was a cook, Varuna, the regent of the sea, supplied water to his palace. Vayu, the god of wind swept his palace and Kubera, the celestial treasure supplied him money and so on. Ravana's ego was so inflated that he thought he was the ultimate person on earth. Power intoxicated him fully and he dared to abduct the wife of Lord Rama who was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Due to his utter ignorance he made Lord Rama his enemy and when Rama killed him immediately Ravana's ignorance vanished like lightening and he became a pure soul and was liberated by Lord Rama. The other demon king Kansa met the same fate by making Krishna, another incarnation of Vishnu his enemy and was killed by Krishna.

The two symbols of this asterism are very significant. The first symbol of the asterism is Elephant's ankus which is used to control and guide this animal. When the mahout who sits atop the elephant and spurs him with the ankus it inflicts a lot of pain in the animal's body. Due to this pain the animal starts following the instruction and learns discipline. In the same way, the lion's tail also has the same impact. The lion's tail is very sensitive and if it is disturbed then the lion becomes ferocious and can easily destroy everything around it. The same phenomenon was seen in the behaviour of Ravana when he was told by wise people in his court that he had not done a good thing by abducting Sita. He would get very angry and at times uncontrollable also. The same way when Kansa was reminded of his atrocities on his sister and her children he also reacted in the same way. Mula is motivated by *kama*, the desire for sensuous pleasures. The over involvement with senses brings the downfall of the person and if person does not stop himself then he is bound to face the consequences of his wrong doings; that is the message of Mula.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

This is the last group of four signs namely — Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces. These four signs comprises nine *nakshatras* starting from Mula to Revati. The predominating *gunas* of these *nakshatras* are *sattva*, lightness, purity, harmony. The basic attribute of Mula is *sattva* with *rajas*, operating at secondary and tertiary level. If we analyse the story of Ravana, he was born to a Brahmin family to a great sage Vishrawa (Vesamuni). Ravana himself was extremely knowledgeable and knew the real meaning of Vedas and was a great devotee of Shiva. He pleased Him with his devotion and in the bargain got all possible boons which made him a mighty king. After these great achievements he got involved in sensuous pleasures. If we notice at secondary and tertiary level *Rajas gunas* which denotes desire to achieve more and more in life. The primary motivation of *nakshatra* is *kama*, ie, seeking

sensuous pleasures. Indulge the person more in materialism. The story of Kansa is also the same. Both these mighty demons met the same fate, killed by Rama and Krishna. Once they reached near the point of death then suddenly their ego melted and they realized the real self of themselves. The kindness of the Lord liberated their soul forever.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Mula-Ketu-Jupiter combination indicates that the person born under this configuration is motivated by materialism. Nevertheless, he aspires to be spiritual. These individuals may possess a rational nature and a curious mind that relishes exploring the basics of any subject. Their primary aim in life is to experience riches and luxury through intelligent means. More often than not, they lose what they earn at one point of time. They undergo a total paradigm shift in their lifetime.They find the foundation from where desirable results sprout, but lose all interest in those activities later in life. Their tamsik (negative) proclivity has to be diminished completely in order to create space for the spiritual forces. Destructive impulses have to be eliminated completely from the system so that a new beginning can take place which eventually gives shape to their real self.

You are blessed with a powerful spirit and when aroused, it is capable of expressing itself in many ways. If it appears in anger then it could be quite dangerous, however, if it is well directed then it gives wonderful results. It is very important for you to be focused or committed, which is difficult at times but you know how to achieve the desired results when the situation arises. You possess a reservoir of energy within you, but take long to realize its true worth.

Your Drawbacks: Many a time, you are not receptive to new ideas and criticism and tend to react inappropriately without realizing the pros and cons of a situation. If you can differentiate between ego and spiritualism, then most of your problems can be

sorted out. You need to understand your *kama* (lust) process and go beyond it to reinvent yourself properly. Obstructions in your path are just intolerable and it works as a double-edged sword for you. If instigated wrongly, you can be absolutely ruthless.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MULA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a place which is peaceful and comfortable. Keep your spine and neck erect. Close your eyes and be ready for the exercise. Start by exhaling. Now start inhaling slowly and gradually. Hold your breath as long as you can easily. During this period while you are holding your breath bring your attention at the base of your spine and recite a small mantra, say, Om. Start exhaling now and empty your lungs completely. Hold your breath for the same duration as you have done earlier. Bring your attention to the top of your head, crown chakra and recite the same mantra, ie, Om. Do this exercise for 10 minutes daily. After a few days you will notice that a lot of toxins have been released from your body.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture and keep your eyes close. Breathe normally and drop the mantra. Bring your attention to your navel and keep it there for a few seconds. Start watching the body from head to toe. In the beginning start looking at your hair upto the roots where they are connected with the skull. Gradually try to see inside your skull, brain and its connections. The same way keep watching your body upto the toes. While you are watching each and every organ of your body, keep healing them also with your pranic energy. If you do this for a few days then you will notice that your body is more stronger, vibrant and energetic.

After completing the 10 minutes, bring back your attention at the navel point and be ready for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep your attention on the navel, the third chakra and keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes

closed. During these 10 minutes you need to understand the emotive side of your personality. From childhood to the present moment a lot of things or events have happened in your life, however some of them are still a source of anxiety or tension. Find out which are those issues and during these 10 minutes try to understand why they happened and what you should do to get rid of them. With your pranic energy you can easily heal your emotional wounds with this nakshatra meditation technique. Within a few days you will find that your mind is clear and there is no iota of disturbing events of your past.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture and bring back your attention on you navel, the Manipurak Chakra. Keep your eyes closed and breathe normally. As you are aware, Niritti, the goddess of destruction is your deity. It has a power to ruin or destroy. It is known as 'Barhana Shakti'. On the heavenly plane it is breaking things apart and on the worldly plane it is crushing things. Overall it is a total destruction. Niritti is also known as Kali, the goddess of destruction who primarily destroys the negativity which has engulfed the soul. If you try to concentrate on the goddess Kali for these 10 minutes and do meditation then you will be able to overcome all the difficulties of your life. Kali is the fierce form of the goddess and Durga is the divine and peaceful form of the goddess. You can meditate on both of them. During this *nakshatra* meditation technique you need to work on your drawbacks like lust, ego and ruthlessness.

Purva Ashadha : (13° 20' — 26° 40' Sagittarius)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE NAKSHATRA

Purva Ashadha is the twentieth asterism of the zodiac which extends from 253° 20' to 266° 40' and resides entirely within the constellation of Sagittarius and consists of two stars which looks like archer's bow. The sign Sagittarius is ruled by Jupiter.

The *nakshatra* itself is governed by Venus. Purva Ashadha means 'The Invincible' or undefeated star. The Vedic deity of *nakshatra* is Apas, the water goddess. Its primary attribute is *sattva*, purity with *rajas*, action at secondary and *tamas*, inertia at tertiary level. The primary motivation of the *nakshatra* is *moksha*. The symbol of the *nakshatra* is Elephant's Tusk.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Purva Ashadha provides a conducive spiritual environment for the soul to dwell in. The symbol of the asterism is Elephant's Tusk which also provides a lot of hidden clues. The elephant looks to be a happy-go-lucky animal who is just unconcerned about his surroundings. If proper direction is given and his hidden potentials are aroused then he is capable of going in the middle of war and taking on opponents. The same way if an individual is provided a right kind of spiritual environment then he can know his real self ie, atma. Elephant's Tusk, the real symbol of the asterism is extremely valuable. Elephant's Tusk is more precious than the entire body of the elephant. If tusk is cut then it has the capacity to grow again.

The kind of wisdom that grows under the influence of Purva Ashadha is of great practical significance. The Vedic deity of the asterism is Apas ie, water. Vedic sages have given a lot of importance to water. Besides life sustaining force, water has a lot of roles to play on this planet. It has the capacity to remove impurities, diseases and destroy all kind of poisons in the atmosphere with its presence. It is also known as the eternal source of energy. The Sun and Moon, two vital planets generate polarized energy impulses, which in turn protect water to support and nourish all kinds of manifestations. The same way Purva Ashadha produces a congenial environment for an individual to grow, sustain, nourish and become more creative.

The lord of *nakshatra* is Venus who is the presiding deity of demons, whereas lord of the sign is Jupiter, the presiding deity of devtas. Both the planets Venus and Jupiter stand out among

the hierarchy of the planets because of their own greatness. Venus leads the individual into indulgence due to its oversensitivity. Jupiter on the other hand is a planet of spirituality. The extreme conflict of materialism and spiritualism can also be seen here. If an individual gets carried away by Venus' nine impulses then he brings about his downfall. When ego becomes self-centered then it blinds the person so he cannot see the higher or spiritual possibility of himself.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The primary attribute of the asterism is *sattva*, lightness, purity with *rajas*, action at secondary and *tamas*, inertia at tertiary level.

Sattva means that an individual's motives are pure at the apparent as well as hidden level. The person is thinking with absolute purity and there isn't an iota of negativity at this level. However at the secondary level the predominating attribute is *rajas* which denotes that at the apparent as well as at the hidden level there is a keenness to achieve something by using his entire energy or force. *Tamas* attribute indicates that although at the apparent level inertia is operating but at the hidden level the individual is working to fulfill his negativity by getting into action. If a balance is maintained at all the three level then spiritualism can flourish under these conditions. The primary motivation of asterism is *moksha*, ie, liberation. It is there to set the pace for spiritual development when initial conditions are taken care of properly. If Venus' nine forces take over others then the whole process can go into reverse motion.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths

The Purva Ashadha-Venus-Jupiter combination means that you want to remain unbeatable in the midst of adversities because you believe that you belong to an unconquerable class. You have an imbedded pride and apparent attraction that compels

you to influence and emphasize the masses at large. There is an inner desire in you to either be a part of cosmic energy or rule it by being identified with it. You want to spread your name and fame throughout the world. Inertia may prevail on a superfluous level but with the support of a suitable environment you are capable of courageous deeds. At times, you externalize your inner capabilities to achieve something almost non-achievable. You are blessed with an intuitive wisdom which helps you at the speed of light at appropriate times.

You have the divine ability to externalize your inner strength and work on the purification of your ego throughout your life. You can produce logic and reasons with immaculate perfection and your arguments become undefeatable. You want to learn, therefore, you are willing to experiment at various levels. This is why you appear complicated to others, but you believe it is important to gather different existing opinions and philosophers to form your own. You find such experiences to be extremely unpleasant, but you also realize that there are no shortcuts. Contradictions and parallel paths open up the floodgates of your discriminating faculties and intuition takes over from that point.

Your Drawbacks: There is constant danger of becoming obstinate and getting caught in the web of an inflated ego. You may have undue pride and live in self-deception without any rhyme or reason. Sometimes you display your negative traits and magnify them unnecessarily. Your over-estimation of yourself creates a very poor picture in other people's minds.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PURVA ASHADHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a place where you are relaxed and comfortable. Close your eyes and keep your spine and neck erect. Start the exercise with exhaling. Now inhale slowly, systematically and fully. Hold your breath as long as you can do easily. While you are holding your breath bring your

attention at the base of the spine,ie, the Mooladhara Chakra and recite the mantra Om. After sometime start exhaling slowly, systematically, fully and empty your lungs completely. Hold your breath for the same duration which you have done earlier. At this stage, while holding your breath bring your attention on the top of your head, the Crown Chakra and recite the mantra Om again. There is no need to recite the mantra while you are inhaling or exhaling. Repeat this exercise for 10 minutes. You will notice that a lot of toxin has come out from your body and it is feeling more light and alert. Your mind is also not wavering like before. It gets focused easily.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture but now breathe normally, stop reciting the mantra and bring your attention on the Mani Purak Chakra located at the base of your navel. These 10 minutes need to be invested on cleansing and understanding your physical body. After keeping your focus on your navel for a few seconds, start watching your body internally from head to toe. In the beginning watch the outer side of your head, gradually peep inside your head and see how your brain is connected to your head, its cell connection and other things. Likewise keep going downwards and watch each and every part of your body. Do this exercise for 10 minutes by observing all organs of your body and healing them at the same time.

Once you have done this process bring back your entire attention at the navel chakra and be there with your imagination. The entire body has a special connection with this chakra. This chakra is responsible for generating heat in the stomach and that heat is very important to digest food. The lower part of the body from this point plays an excretory role and the upper part of body from this point generates positive energy which is spread throughout the body. Energize all parts of the body by focusing on this chakra and you will be able to rejuvenate your body thoroughly.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture while breathing normally and keeping your attention on the navel chakra. Make sure your eyes are closed throughout this exercise. During these 10 minutes you need to work on the emotional side of your being. Buddha said life is a sorrow and full of impermanency. What Buddha said we all experience in life and can also vouch that this life is full of sorrows. The latter part of Buddha's statement is not easily understood. He said the world is impermanent. However we look and work for the permanent arrangements in this world which is just not possible. We seek permanency in relationship, status, money, wealth, youth and so on. Over a period of time we create many sources of suffering due to this ignorance. You need to work on this aspect of your being during this nakshatra meditation and feel free from mental involvements.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture, breathing normally and bring back your attention on the third chakra. The presiding deity of Purva Ashadha asterism is Apas, waters. It is bestowed with 'Varchograhana Shakti', its power is that of invigoration. On the heavenly plane it is strength and on the worldly plane it is connection. Overall one gains lustre out of this combination. Now you know the *shakti* or power of your *nakshatra* is water, the eternal life source. Water is the purest form of matter on this earth. You can pray to this eternal force during this nakshatra meditation technique. If however that is not very attractive to you then you can imagine the picture of Lord Shiva and Ganges is out flowing from his locks. If you focus your mind on this image gradually you will find yourself deeply connected with water as well as Lord Shiva. All your miseries, problems, difficulties can be solved by Shiva's energy. Do it daily and see the magic yourself.

You need to work on your drawbacks through this *nakshatra* meditation technique. Your main drawbacks are obstinacy, inflated ego, self deception and over estimation of yourself.

Uttara Ashadha : (26° 40' Sagittarius — 10° 0' Capricorn)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE NAKSHATRA

Uttara Ashada is the twenty first *nakshatra* of the zodiac consisting of two stars in the breast of the archer and extends from 266° 40' to 280° 0' of the zodiac. Uttara Ashada extends extends from 26° 40' to 30° 0' in Sagittarius ruled by Jupiter and from 0°0' to 10° 0' in Capricorn ruled by Saturn. In other words first quarter of the asterism lies in Sagittarius and the rest three quarters are spread in Capricorn. The *nakshatra* is ruled by the Sun. The presiding deity of the asterism is Vishwedevas, the universal god. The primary and tertiary attributes of the asterism are *sattvas*, harmony however secondary attribute is *rajas*, action. Its primary motivation is *moksha*, ie, liberation. The symbol of the asterism is Planks of Bed.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

As a matter of fact Uttara Ashadha is an extension of Purva Ashadha, previous asterism but its nature is entirely different than the earlier asterism. Most of the impulses which are active at this level initially influence the psychological aspect of an individual. Previous asterism denotes the inner reality of an individual is hiding within the outer physical clothing which he is trying to purify and spiritualize. However the realization of inner understanding has to be absorbed and assimilated in the person's psychic nature only then true understanding can take place. The moment this realization dawns the universal laws of nature begin to manifest to the individual. The perception of life is seen in a different light with this kind of understanding and a person's concept of life becomes different altogether. He no longer perceives himself different from the entire universe. The Vishwedevas, the universal gods help him to understand this great phenomenon.

The symbol of the asterism is Planks of a Bed. The role of the planks is to give support to the bed. This symbol also implies

that the planks have provided a provisional arrangement for sitting and resting. All these things are happening at a psychological level so one can understand the universal phenomenon behind it. Until and unless one is not psychologically ready for spiritual journey then he cannot make much advancement on that path. Due to the influence of this asterism those hidden qualities of an individual start surfacing which can lead him towards the path of *moksha* or liberation.

The *nakshatra* itself is ruled by the Sun. The first quarter of *nakshatra* falls in Sagittarius which is ruled by Jupiter and rest three quarters are spread in the Capricorn sign ruled by Saturn. The Sun and Jupiter enjoy the greatest harmony of the entire cosmos. The Sun rules over soul and Jupiter being a guru of all the devtas provides the maximum support to the soul on the path of realization. Those born under this asterism have the fullest blessings of the benevolent Jupiter. The same is not true for the remaining three quarters of the asterism which falls under Capricorn sign ruled by Saturn. Saturn is a bitter enemy of the Sun but primary a highly spiritual planet himself. If the individual is on the path of self-realization then Saturn acts as a friend and removes all those impediments which are either stopping the process or creating problems. However if soul is still in an indulgent mode due to ignorance then Saturn will induce all kinds of pain, trial and turbulence so soul can perceive its reality and drops ignorance instantly. The Vishwedevas, the universal gods are there to help the soul to be a light unto itself.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Uttara Ashadha's primary and tertiary attributes are *sattva*, harmony while the secondary attribute is *rajas*, action. The primary motivation of the asterism is *moksha*, ie, liberation.

This third group which comprises nine *nakshatras* and four signs are predominated by *sattva* attributes. By the time the soul reaches at this stage a lot of understanding and purification has already taken place. If we analyse this particular

constellation then *sattva* attributes are predominating at primary as well as tertiary levels but *rajas*, action is helmed in between at the secondary level. The person is initiating his journey with universal understanding and keen to lead a life of purity. After ascending on this path his desire of worldly achievements brings him down from the path of lightness and truth and he gets entangled in mundane affairs. It does not take him long to realize what he has done to himself when he sees himself deeply entangled in futility. The Vishwedevas are there to uplift him the moment the individual realizes the uselessness of his *rajas* attributes, activities. At tertiary level *sattva*, knowledge, purity, harmony is there to take care of him. Since the primary motivation of the asterism is *moksha* this also helps him make his bond stronger to himself.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Uttara Ashadha-Sun-Jupiter combination denotes that you perceive life very differently right from the beginning. With this sort of understanding, you try to leave a pattern which has a universal appeal. It takes rather long for you to make up your mind but once the objectives are clear, you approach them in a systematic and disciplined way. There is a deep humanitarian concern and a feeling of justice in your nature for one and all. You are a hard taskmaster and do not leave any stone unturned unless you become a master yourself. Your dedication eventually creates a beautiful passage for you and you find your rightful place in this world. Failure does not desist you from your goal; on the contrary, it strengthens your resilience to achieve it with more vigour.

Uttara Ashadha-Sun-Saturn combination indicates that you are willing to suffer in isolation provided you can project yourself on a bigger canvas to prove some hidden points to yourself. The supreme quality of your being is that you are capable of going beyond restrictions and can destroy any establishment which does not have a universal appeal. There

is a greater urge in you to develop your intellect at par with the intellectuals and socialize with them. You are well ahead of time and a pathfinder for others. Whatever pain and difficulties you suffer at a personal level enables you to empathize with others who are going through the same. You are thoroughly practical in your approach and understand the ground realities well. There is a strong tendency to translate most of your ideas into action.

You prefer to be active all the time. The experiences gained with constant activities help you to readjust at a psychological level. At times you do not mind suffering personal pain in lieu of understanding the real meaning of life which also helps you to become internally strong. You can easily sacrifice your personal pleasure to help others if need be. You have an inherent concern for others which makes you popular among peers and friends. At a deeper level of your being, you are a friend of humanity and want to contribute to it in a big way, but without making much fuss about it.

You are blessed with great insight, are balanced in approach and develop an aggression which can be used as the situation demands. You can be focused and can penetrate anything that you undertake with your vision. You acquire practical knowledge on your own and this helps in developing leadership qualities. You can relate very easily with people and this helps you to accomplish your mission in this life. You are persistent and never leave any stone unturned until you achieve success. You are idealistic and always set big goals for yourself. Your virtues are always refined. If you follow the right path then success can never be far from you.

Your Drawbacks: Your main flaw is that you are too rigid in your approach. Very seldom do you make amendments, which can put off even your friends. Sometimes you are over-cautious and reluctant to budge from your pre-determined stand which creates problems for you. You pay more emphasis

to the end rather than the journey and in the way, the process becomes painful.

You may face failures early in life, but later on you meet with success. You need to learn the importance of patience while confronting adverse situations in life. Your excessive activism can take a toll on your personality. If you are not fully responsible for any project then you contribute half-heartedly. Do not leave a task undone because it will have a bad impact on your character. You are self-centred and stubborn which can create problems for you.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR UTTARA ASHADHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a comfortable and relaxed place. Keep your spine and neck erect while your eyes are closed. Start the exercise by exhaling. Now inhale slowly, gradually and systematically. Hold your breath as long as you can do it easily and bring your attention at the base of your spine, the first chakra. During that time when you are holding your breath recite a small mantra mentally, say Om. Start exhaling slowly and completely. Empty your lungs of air. Hold your breath for the same duration as you have done earlier. Put your attention on the top of your head, the Crown Chakra and recite the same mantra, ie, Om. Do this exercise for the next 10 minutes. After few days of practicing this breathing technique you will notice that your body has thrown out a lot of toxins. It is more light, relaxed and rejuvenated.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Breathe normally and drop the mantra, bring back your attention on the Mani Purak Chakra, the third chakra which is positioned at the base of the navel. These 10 minutes are very important because you are going to pay a lot of attention on each and every part of your body and heal it at the same time with your pranic energy or life force. Start watching your body mentally, gradually from head to toe. During these 10 minutes you need to see each and every,

external as well as internal part of your body closely. If you can take the help of an elementary anatomy book then you will be able to understand your body much more. You have the ability to heal your body with your pranic energy. If there is any chronic problem in any part of your body then you can focus on that more to heal it. If you practice this for a few days you will notice that your body is more strong, cooperative and alert.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed and bring back your attention to the navel chakra. Breathnormally. You need to know and understand the emotive side of your personality. There are many unresolved emotional issues which had been buried in the subconscious mind and can surface anytime if the right kind of environment is created. Some emotional issues are such which are very difficult to get rid of because we keep on reminding ourselves due to lack of understanding or due to circumstances. You need to clear your mind from all those emotional issues which are an impediment in the growth of your personality. If the mind remains entangled with negativity then it is not easy to make progress on the spiritual path therefore it is our duty to free ourselves from all those psychological burdens.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed. Breathe normally. Bring back your attention on your navel chakra. This is one of the most important chakras of the human body because it provides the base of its survival. You may be aware that Ravana has kept the pitcher of nectar hidden at this chakra.

Uttara Ashadha is ruled by Vishwedevas, the universal gods. It is blessed with 'Apradhrisya Shakti', its power to grant unchallengeable victory. On the heavenly plane it is the strength to win and on the worldly plane it is the goal one can win. Overall it is unchallenged winner. The presiding deity of the asterism is Vishwedevas, the universal gods. You need to

meditate on Vishwedevas or the hidden universal gods who take care of this world. Due to your *nakshatra* you have a special affinity with them. If you imagine Vishwedevas at the base of your navel chakra and identify with them then most of your difficulties will be sorted out without much effort. You can plan your life in a much better way and whatever impediments you have can be got rid of easily. The navel point is the source of spiritual connectivity. According to mythology the entire universe or Brahmanda was created from the navel of Vishnu. The first person who took birth on this universe was Brahma who also appeared from the navel of Vishnu, seated on a lotus.

During this *nakshatra* meditation technique you need to get rid of your drawbacks. You need to work on your impatience, hyperactivity and self centeredness.

Shravana : (10° 0' — 23° 20' Capricorn)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Shravana is the twenty second *nakshatra* of the zodiac which extends from 280° 0' to 293° 20' in the sign of Capricorn ruled by Saturn. Its main star is Altair, Alpha Delphines. The lord of *nakshatra* is the Moon. Lord Vishnu is the presiding deity, the preserver of the universe. With the help of Vishnu one can perceive the truth of manifestation hidden by the world of Maya, ie, illusion. The symbols of the asterism are an ear and an arrow. Its basic attribute is *sattva*, harmony with *tamas*, inertia at secondary and *rajas*, action at tertiary level. Its primary motivation is *artha* directed activities. Shravana's basic direction is towards the Great Silence which provides the background to survive the entire scheme of manifestation. The power of *nakshatra* is that it can lead the person to deeper meditation. However if he still choose to be materialistic then he gets involved in it also.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The word *Shravana* is derived from the Sanskrit verb *shru* which means to listen and it symbolizes the ear. Vedas as well

as Upanishads were full of praise of Shravanato hear. Shravana is the only sense of human being which is most active when it is absolutely passive. One can hear without making any effort. As a matter of fact all kind of noises of the world keep attacking your ear drums all the time without your even being aware of it. However if you have to see something then you have to make an effort and focus your entire attention on that object if it is not clearly visible. Without effort one cannot speak and if you want to speak louder, then your efforts have to increase accordingly. When you want to smell something of your choice you have to again make some sort of efforts but listening is the only action which happens when there is no action at all.

Perhaps that is the reason that Upanishads gave so much importance to the Shravana. It has been said in Upanishads that the master and the disciple should listen together to what is really listenable. During the time of Vedic culture all the teachings were dependent on two instruments — one is Sharavana and another is Shruti, to remember. Whatever one has heard from the masters and out of that whatever he can reveal at a given time comes under the area of Shruti, remembrance. Silence and Nada sound were the two primordial sources of manifestation. Nada is known as Nada Brahma also, the first sound of the universe (god's voice) which appeared out of the Great Silence. When one starts listening and understands the meaning of listening then one can hear the eternal sound or Nada Brahma. That is the reason that Upnishads were full of praise of Shravana.

The symbols of the asterism are ear and arrow. The ear is directly connected with the Shravana; voice synchronizes to the ears only. Another symbol of the asterism is arrow. The arrows have been used widely in Vedic culture to explain that energy was directed to yield certain kind of results. The archer is standing at one point but aiming somewhere else with his arrow which is more significant than his presence at a particular point. In present reference arrow and ear are interconnect which

enables the person to hear what is really worth hearing. The presiding deity of asterism is Vishnu, the preserver of the universe. With his support one can come out from the clutches of Maya or the illusionary world.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The primary attribute of the asterism is *sattva*, harmony with *tamas*, inertia at secondary and *rajas*, action at tertiary level. The primary *guna* (attribute) of the asterism is *sattva* which clearly indicates if hearing is not worthwhile then it leads to many complexities. At the same time there is no guarantee that if one is listening correctly then he will follow the same way. If one hears wrong things then downfall is imminent but if after hearing the gospel it is not practiced in life that also makes no sense. In this asterism the basic attribute is *sattva*, harmony but by the time it reaches at the secondary level it converts into tamsik level. *Tamas* or inertia indicates that after touching the pinnacle or mountain one can easily fall into the valley, because mountain and valley progress together. Exactly the same phenomenon can be observed here. At the tertiary level *Rajas* or action attributes are in operation which denotes that after touching the valley one makes efforts at least to come up to the surface and *rajas* is working in that direction too.

The whole phenomenon indicates that *gunas* are playing a complex role in this particular asterism. There is an obvious reason for that the asterism is ruled by an emotive planet — the Moon and the sign is governed by the practical planet Saturn. The Moon and Saturn are not friends. The Moon mainly represents mind which is ruled by itself only. Saturn looks after the materialistic as well as spiritual aspect of the world. Saturn being a jurist as well as hard taskmaster is willing to give all kind of worldly pleasure if they are based on merits only. Saturn does not believe in giving undue advantage to anybody. Primarily Saturn is a spiritual planet. When one leads an organized and systematic worldly life then Saturn automatically

promotes that individual at the plane of spiritualism. The mind (Moon) has a habit of learning the hard way.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Shravana-Moon-Saturn combination denotes that every impact under it should stimulate a profound insight into the harmony that exists around oneself. This situation arises out of personal discontentment that you feel when confronted with life's problems which are then set aside. Probably from this point onwards, you develop an attitude of complete rebellion against the existing situation and set yourself free from the past with non-expectations of any perceived results. This could only be possible when you go deep into the silence of your being and start listening to the inner voice in an uninterrupted way. When your are connected with yourself, then communicating with others is no longer an issue. However it is very hard in the beginning to connect with one's umbilical cord, but the moment you succeed and the connection is made then from that point you are a transformed person. The beauty of life unfolds in front of you and divinity can be felt at this stage.

You are extremely active, hard working and focused on your projects. You do not believe in leaving work half done and this trait helps you to achieve your targets. There is a keen desire to develop your skills and share your ideas with others. This makes you quite famous and you can shine as a writer, teacher, philosopher or a scientist. You also love solitude and it helps you to get connected with yourself and that is the magic of your entire personality. Financial security is also very important to you and it helps you to achieve your goals. Success comes to you after an initial struggle. Sometimes you suffer pain and unhappiness due to your own commitments.

Your Drawbacks: You can be quite rigid and obstinate in your behaviour. Do not waste your time in gossip. You are very

sensitive and can get hurt easily. You can face a lot of disillusionment in the early part of your life. You can have enemies because of jealously, suffer from an inferiority complex but as you grow older things improve.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SHRAVANA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a peaceful and comfortable place. Keep your spine and neck erect. You can put your hands on your lap or knees. Close your eyes and before you start the exercise exhale completely. Start inhaling slowly and completely. Hold your breath as long as you can easily. Bring your attention on the base of the spine, the Mooladhara Chakra and count 1, 2, 3 .... If you wish you can chant a small mantra and say Om.This counting or mantra should be done mentally. After inhaling start exhaling, slowly and completely, put your attention on the top of your head, the crown chakra and count 1, 2, 3... Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes.

Be ready for the second stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Before you proceed with nakshatra meditation you need to follow a few instructions. Bring back your attention to the navel chakra, Manipurak Chakra, breathe normally and drop the counting or mantra. Make sure your eyes remain closed. These 10 minutes need to be invested on knowing your entire body internally as well as externally. Gradually bring your attention on the top of your head and keep on watching your body slowly, minutely from head to toe. For instance begin with watching your hair, the shape of skull, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, nose, face, teeth, neck, shoulders and proceed to your toes. During this nakshatra meditation technique you are watching your body externally as well as internally. At the same time you are healing your body with your pranic energy.

After completing your 10 minutes bring your attention on the navel chakra and be ready for the third stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed. Breathe normally and bring your attention on the navel chakra. During these 10 minutes you need to understand the emotional side of your personality. There are many unresolved emotional issues which keep on bothering us from time to time. Although you try to discard them vehemently and forget them also, they still keep on surfacing from time to time. They are big impediments for our emotional sanity and spiritual growth. You need to see if any of those issues are stem-blockers. Then you need to remove it from your memory with the help of nakshatra meditation technique. Keep sitting in the same posture and be ready for the next stage.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Breathe normally with your eyes closed. Keep your attention focused on your navel chakra for the next 10 minutes. Your asterism Shravana is ruled by the presiding deity Vishnu, the sustainer. Shravana is blessed with 'Samhanana Shakti' and its power is that of connection. On the heavenly plane it is seeking and on the worldly level it is path. Overall it is connecting with everything. Lord Vishnu is one of the supreme gods of the Universe and he is the preserving force. Vishnu has come on this earth with many incarnations and Rama and Krishna were the most popular ones. You can pray Vishnu directly or any of his forms you may like. Connect yourself from all the levels with this primordial force of the universe and get liberated one day.

You need to work on your drawbacks with the help of *nakshatra* meditation techniques. Your main drawbacks are rigidity, being obstinate, jealousy and at times having an inferiority complex.

Dhanishtha : (23° 20' Capricorn — 6° 40' Aquarius)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Dhanishtha is the twenty third asterism of the zodiac which

extends from 23° 20' to 30° 0' Capricorn and from 0° 0' to 6° 40' Aquarius. Dhanishtha Nakshatra extends from 293° 20' to 306° 40' of the zodiac. Dhanishtha consists of a group of four stars located in the head of Delphinus, the Dolphin. First half of the *nakshatra* falls in Capricorn and the latter half of the constellation comes under Aquarius. Both the signs Capricorn and Aquarius are governed by Saturn. The asterism itself is ruled by Mars. Its primary attribute is *sattva*, lightness but the secondary and tertiary levels are controlled by *tamas*, inertia. The presiding deities of the *nakshatra* are eight Vasus, the epitomes of cosmic energy. The symbol of the *nakshatra* is a Drum, also known as Mridanga. The motivational impulse of the *nakshatra* is Dharma,ie, honour or principle.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The symbol of Dhanishtha is drum which is very significant. Lord Shiva's musical instrument is damroo or a miniature drum. The drum is hollow and covered by stretched leather which is systematically tied with tiny knots of two ropes. These small ropes are used to stretch the leather so it can produce the desired sound. The drum is played by tapping rhythmically on either side. When Shiva takes the form of Nataraja, the divine dancer then this cosmic music is played by himself. It is believed that the whole universe starts dancing with the beat of his divine drum. The music has inherent divinity within itself which can connect each and every particle of this universe with oneness. The same divinity was created by Lord Krishna when he was playing a bamboo-cane flute while sitting in an isolated place under the tree. The sound of the flute was so lovely and alluring that all the *gopis* and cows surrounded him within no time. Dhanishtha also shows the preparedness of the soul for higher ascendance.

The drum as a symbol of Dhanishtha connects the individual soul to its roots of manifestation which starts echoing on its own. Cosmic void emits sound waves which

cements cosmic ideas. Mahashunya or cosmic void is the basic necessity from which the perception of all sounds arises. When the world is filled with noise and agitation then beneath it one can see the great silence which rules the real nature of things. This process automatically leads towards the soundless sound which is the main aim of the meditation. All forms of manifestation are born out of void with certain divine purpose. However at this stage the individual may experience a great sorrow, suffering, difficulties and at times maladjustments with the environment. Because bipolarity of personality is reflected by the symbol of the asterism — drum also plays a big role at this stage. One needs a divine strength to make a quantum jump to cross the realm of bipolarity. The presiding deity of the asterism are the Vasus, the cosmic gods who are there to provide the necessary help.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

At primary level Dhanishtha's attribute is *sattva* but at secondary and tertiary levels it is dominated by *tamas* qualities. Its primary motivation is *moksha*, ie, liberation. The symbol of asterism is drum and both the sides are filled with hollowness. To make a drum one needs a vessel which is full of empty space which is covered by stretched leather from both the sides to give it a shape of a drum which can produce sound. The basic purpose of the drum is to produce music which has the power to connect the individual with super consciousness. This is well--defined by the primary attribute of the asterism which is *sattva*, harmony. To create this divine sound the drum has to be beaten at both the ends where the leather is stretched. This very activity is directly connected with *tamas* attribute or greater efforts are put in to get the desired results. When the stretched leather is beaten rhythmically then it produces electromagnetic waves which converts into a music and echoes in the atmosphere. The divineness of music can connect the soul with the universal consciousness.

The drum itself cannot produce beautiful music unless and until one knows how to play it. One has to learn the art of music with great efforts only then an individual can be well-versed in creating music. Learning is directly related with the *Tamas* attribute which is operative at secondary and tertiary levels. To begin with learning of music is not an easy task. One needs to put in tremendous and continuous efforts under an expert's guidance, only then one can learn the art.

Learning and playing music is still easy but producing a music which connects the soul with the ultimate is not an easy task at all; that is what is implied by the sequence of *sattvik*, rajsik and tamsik pattern of *gunas*. The natural pattern of *gunas* is *sattvik*, *rajsik* and *tamsik* but all the *nakshtras* barring one have a complicated pattern of *gunas*. Perhaps that is why people born in different *nakshtras* are distinctly different from each other.

However the primary motivational force of the asterism is dharma, right conduct which helps the individual to learn the divinity involved with the music. The deity of the constellation is eight Vasus, powerful gods of the cosmos which also helps the individual to echo the sound which connects the individual with the cosmos.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Dhanishtha-Mars-Saturn combination indicates that the basic impulse is to empty out your inner self or soul from all the past experiences and ready yourself for some bigger transfusion. Living with past experiences and regression will not help you learn something new or perceive something extremely beautiful which has the capacity to transform you completely. It is true that this stage can be attained only after going through stress, pain, frustration, depression and loneliness at a greater level. A temporary hell-like situation automatically opens a door to heaven through which you can walk freely. Dhanishtha's basic role in this sign

is to prepare you for something big after touching the lowest ebb of your being. Through the passage of a lonely path, darkness and deep silence, one can prepare himself for divine music or greater harmony within. The basic job of the sign Lord Saturn is to go through all sorts of discomforts and stress in order to lift you from the ordinary experience to the greater heights of your being.

The Dhanishtha-Mars-Saturn combination will generate a very different and unifying magnetic current due to the influence of the sign Aquarius. Aquarius is considered a sign of humanity and its symbol of an overflowing pitcher speaks volumes for its kindness, generosity and compassion. Rain is eager to fill the pond to the optimum with its fresh shower provided it is already emptied out in the same way if one is to create Mahashunya or cosmic void; it can only then be filled by sound waves to energize the whole atmosphere. This combination also enables you to discard the past and look for new ideas to create a congenial world where one can easily float. You may experience acute stress and agony but then it is the only way to transform yourself completely. One cannot experience the inner divinity until and unless one has gone through the process of suffering. Your greatness lies in that you do not give up but fight till the end to achieve your mission. Once that is accomplished, you are in a comfort zone.

You are gifted with insight, are a perfect listener and have great admiration for truth. The search for unity and connection with one and all takes you places. You are aware of the ground realities, and therefore, start working with limitations keeping unlimited goals in mind. You are a visionary, and believe in moving step by step. You are a born fighter and blessed with a never-say-die spirit till the goals are met.

The global ideas are very appealing and they can unify people for a common cause. The humanitarian side of your being is so charming that it attracts others towards you even as you become a focal point. You are very forceful and a great

explorer of the truth. These basic traits help you gain fame and recognition. You are resourceful and it helps you to explore unknown areas. Your search for knowledge or newness never ends and this puts you ahead of others. Primarily you have a great desire to acquire wisdom which can be used for the benefit of self as well as others.

Your Drawbacks: You may have tremendous lust for materialism. Sometimes you can be over ambitious, insatiable and miserly and may eye another's wealth. You can be extremely jealous, aloof and insensitive, callous and exceptionally revengeful. Your selfish attitude can cross the limits if this combination is afflicted at the time of birth.

On the negative side you could be cruel, selfish and callous and mindlessly striving to acquire everything for your own selfish satisfaction. Your over-ambitiousness and narcissist attitude could put off many. You can be stingy and extremely revengeful. If you do not change your attitude, you will suffer and repent for long.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DHANISHTHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Find a place which is comfortable and can provide relaxation. Sit down comfortably, close your eyes and keep your spine and neck erect. To begin with exhale all the air from your lungs. Start the exercise with inhaling gradually and completely. Hold your breath for as many seconds as you can do easily. Bring your attention at the base of your spine, the first chakra and count 1, 2, 3 .... You can also choose to recite a small mantra during this time. After counting or reciting the mantra start exhaling slowly and completely and hold your breath for the same duration as you have done earlier. Bring your attention on the top of your head, the seventh chakra. Count 1, 2, 3 or recite the mantra. The recitation of numbers or a mantra should be done mentally. Do this exercise for the next 10 minutes. You will get connected with yourself. With this

exercise, this breathing technique most of the toxins will come out of your body. You will feel light and relaxed.

After completing the 10 minutes bring your attention on the third chakra, ie, the navel chakra and breathe normally. Stop reciting the mantra.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture with your eyes closed. Breathe normally and focus your attention on the navel *chakra.* During this exercise you need to know your physical body completely. Bring your attention to your head and start watching your body from head to toe. The whole exercise should be done slowly and observing each and every part of your body externally as well as internally. To begin with start watching your hair, skull, forehead, ear, eyes, nose, cheeks, chin, gradually the entire body. Try to know the internal organs of your body like the structure of your brain and its connectivity with the entire body; likewise the other organs of the body. While observing your body you can heal each and every part with your pranic energy. If any part of your body is giving constant trouble then heal it more with your pranic energy. You will be amazed that most of your troubles will vanish very soon.

After completing 10 minutes bring your attention back to the navel chakra. Keep your eyes closed and be ready for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture and make sure your eyes are closed. Bring your attention on the navel chakra and breathe normally. These 10 minutes are very important because you are going to observe the emotional side of your personality. There are many factors responsible for making our personality the way we are now. At the same time there are few emotional issues which were never resolved properly therefore they keep on haunting us in present also. You need to find out all those things which are the source of anxiety

too. During this nakshatra meditation technique, see which are the factors or situations that keep on troubling you and how to get rid of them. Understand those situations once again during this meditation and see the pros and cons and be free yourself. Once you are free from the past negativity then you will start getting connected with your positivity.

After completing the 10 minutes bring back your attention on the navel and keep sitting in the same posture.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture and bring your attention back on the navel chakra. Breathe normally. Make sure your eyes remain closed. Your nakshatra Dhanishtha is ruled by Vasus, the gods of abundance. Nakshatra is blessed with 'Khyapayitri Shakti'. Its power is to give abundance and fame. On the heavenly plane it is birth and on the worldly plane it is prosperity. Overall it gives the power to bring people together.

There are eight Vasus who are the deities of the earth and give abundance on the worldly plane. The eight Vasus are Pratyush (Sun), Som (Moon), Dhara (earth), Anala (fire), Apa (space), Anila (wind), Prabhash (sky) and Dhruv (pole star). All these Vasus are connected with the cosmos. If you pray or connect with the cosmos then you can easily go into trance. From time immemorial man has been looking up to the heavens and seeking blessings from it. Perhaps ancient man knew that all the eight primordial powers are connected with the space. They are your deities and willing to help you if you become a real seeker.

You must be knowing your drawbacks, if not then these are cruelty, callousness, selfishness and at times mindlessness. You need to work on these negativities.

Shatabhisha : (6° 40' — 20° 0' Aquarius)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Shatabhisha is the twenty fourth nakshtra of the zodiac which is located in a large group of dim stars in the constellation of

Aquarius, the water bearer. Shatabhisha *nakshatra* extends from 306° 40' to 320° 0' of the zodiac in Aquarius sign ruled by Saturn. Shatabhisha is also known as the physicians of the gods. The literal meaning of Shatabhisha is hundred physicians or hundred healers. The other meaning of Shatabhisha is hundred stars. Shatabhisha is ruled by the planet Rahu who is known as a shadowy planet which brings karmic rectification. Rahu, the most mystical planet of the zodiac is further highlighted by assigning to it a thousand-petalled flower representing the hundred stars constituting the constellation. Its primary and tertiary attributes are *sattva*, harmony while on the secondary level it is *tamas* or inertia. The deity of Shatabhisha is Varuna, the bestower of wisdom. The primary motivation of the asterism is Dharma or honour, ie, principle.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Flower is the most auspicious symbol which appears after completing the efforts which are required to achieve the goal. In this sense the flowering of Shatabhisha represents the achievements of the purpose for which the manifestation came into its being. It indicates that the creation is blossoming at the optimum. The flowering of the thousand-petalled flower is referred to for the ultimate in the multi-dimensional evolution process. For us mortals or human beings it is directly connected to the thousand-petalled lotus or the Crown Chakra. This energy or *shakti* is known as Kundalini Shakti. When the Kundalini Shakti arises then a person becomes liberated from the process of birth and death.

Another meaning of Shatabhisha is hundred physicians or hundred healers, pouring the secret pot containing the divine nectar of immorality. These reference points indicate that Shatabhisha has a powerful influence which is capable of transforming the entire human being. Its influence is such that an individual is fired with missionary zeal and enthusiasm. He can easily sacrifice all kind of worldly attainments to fulfill his

spiritual objectives. The presiding deity of Shatabhisha is Varuna, earlier Vedic god. He is bestowed with unlimited cosmic knowledge. It has been mentioned in the Vedas that with his knowledge he can hold together mankind and the earth. He is also known as the god who had made the golden sunshine in the heavens. The wind which fills the atmosphere is his breath. He can weigh 'True' and 'False' correctly. He taught the rishi Vashishtha the mystery of the world which no ordinary man can understand. Varuna controls and directs all mysterious powers of wisdom and compassion so that the individual under the influence of Shatabhisha can readily transform and become a new ray of light himself. Rahu is the lord of the asterism who also controls all the six mysterious powers which surrounds his crown.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Shatabhisha's primary and tertiary attribute is *sattva* but at the secondary level it is *tamas* or inertia. If we analyse the Shatabhisha from any angle then a clear picture comes to mind that Shatabhisha represents completion. The thousand-petalled flower representing the hundred stars indicates that nature and man both have the capabilities of blossoming completely. In the case of nature it happens easily because it is not polluted unlike man who has been due to his thought process. The purity of nature can be seen anywhere in the world but this is a rarity in the case of man. Very seldom do we come across somebody who has blossomed completely or become enlightened. Awakening of Kundalini Shakti is also a rare phenomenon. Perhaps the *Tamas* attribute which predominates the middle level becomes a great impediment. However *nakshatra* provides the great opportunity to those who want to transcend this negativity of *tamas* attribute. The primary motivation of the asterism is Dharma, right activities. If one follows the path of Dharma then the deity Varuna, the bestower of wisdom can uplift the soul on a higher plane.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Shatabhisha-Rahu-Saturn combination will produce harmony despite initial hiccups and difficulties. You are blessed with mysterious powers of wisdom which are capable of transforming you completely. The basic impulse of your personality is to get into the revolutionary process and after achieving secret knowledge, you dedicate your energy for the upliftment of others. You are fired with a tremendous zeal and you cannot rest till you express and communicate your vision to others. More often than not, you are born with futuristic ideas of the world. You are always motivated to create a new life out of the old one and you consider yourself a thinker in your own right. You are extremely practical and work first for duty and later for personal satisfaction or glorification. You are like a flower whose beauty and fragrance is for others, and not for self.

Being a practical person, you are concerned about your personal image, socializing patterns and are ready to adjust to the changing patterns of the world. You understand that a strong body possesses a strong mind, one which can be used effectively in this world. You try to work for the development of your consciousness because you believe that the tuning of the mind, body and soul can create wonders. Sometimes you can put voluntary restrictions on yourself to be more proper and dutiful. Your missionary zeal and enthusiasm helps you to achieve your targets easily. You are a firm believer that the infinite cosmos is full of knowledge and energy and is ready to shower this on anyone who is willing to accept it. You have the bona fide right to utilise it for yourself and for the benefit of others. This very attitude will single you out among others.

Your Drawbacks: On the other side of your personality is isolation and depression. Sometimes you feel life is nothing but a duty and one has to do it under certain restrictions. If you allow yourself more suffering and apathy, you can create major problems for yourself. Invariably, you have a difficult and

unstable childhood and these impressions live long in your memory. You can be harsh and your acidic tongue can create problems for you.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SHATABHISHA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a place which is peaceful and comfortable. Keep your spine and neck erect while your eyes are closed.

Before you start the exercise exhale completely and keep your lungs empty. Now start the exercise with inhaling slowly and completely. Hold your breath for a few seconds and bring your attention at the base of the spine, the Mooladhara. While you are holding your breath count 1, 2, 3 ... internally. After doing this process start exhaling slowly and completely. Hold your breath for the same duration as you have done earlier and bring your attention at the top of your head, ie, the crown chakra. Count again mentally. Do this exercise for 10 minutes uninterruptedly. You will notice that most of the toxins of your body have been released with these breathing techniques.

Be ready for the second stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Breathe normally and bring back your attention at the Mani Purak Chakra or the navel chakra. These 10 minutes need to be invested on your physical body. Bring back your attention at the top of your head and start watching your body gradually. In the beginning you can observe your hair, skull, forehead, ear, eyebrows, eyes, lips, neck and the same way the entire body. You should observe internal organs of your body and know more about them. While you are watching your body, keep on healing each and every part of your body with your pranic energy. If any part of your body is a source of pain and tension then heal it with your pranic energy. If you do it for a few days you will be astonished to know that your body is actually healed. Prepare for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Bring your attention back to the navel chakra and breathe normally. During these 10 minutes you need to know and understand the emotional side of your personality. All of us are confronted with good and bad situations in life. Sometimes it is very difficult to overcome those emotions because they are very deeply rooted in our subconscious mind. You need to know which are those events or situations that still create a thousand ripples in your mind from time to time. You need to understand those situations while sitting and doing your meditation. You need to free yourself from all those events once and for all. Be ready for the next stage.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Keep on sitting in the same posture and focus your attention on the navel chakra. The presiding deity of your nakshatra is Varuna, the god of the cosmic waters. It is blessed with 'Bheshaja Shakti'. It has the power of healing. On the heavenly plane it is the extension or overall pervasiveness. On the worldly level it is a support of all. Overall it makes the world free of calamity. Varuna is also known as the god of wisdom. What water does for the atmosphere, wisdom does the same for the mind. The job of water and wisdom is to purify all the impurities of the environment as well as mind. Varuna is such a powerful deity who can cure all the sins of the body, mind, soul and atmosphere. If you pray and be one with your deity then all impurities of mind can be removed within no time.

You also need to work on your negativities, isolation, depression and your harsh and acidic tongue.

Purva Bhadrapada : (20° 0' Aquarius — 3° 20' Pisces)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

The twenty fifth *nakshatra* of the zodiac is known as Purva Bhadrapada which extends from 320° 0' to 333° 20' of the zodiac and consists of two stars. The *nakshatra* is associated

with cosmic stability and imparts fearlessness. The first three quarters of the asterism fall within Aquarius sign ruled by Saturn which extends from 20° 0' to 30° 0' in Aquarius sign and the last quarter lies in Pisces which extends from 0° 0' to 3° 20' in Pisces sign ruled by Jupiter. The *nakshatra* itself is ruled by Jupiter. Its primary and secondary attributes are *Sattva*, harmony while at tertiary level it is *rajas*, activities. The presiding deity of the asterism is Aja Ekapada, the one-footed goat. The astrological symbol of asterism is a sword. The primary motivational impulse of the asterism is arth or goal directed.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

A lot of significance has been attached to the presiding deity of the asterism which is Aja Ekapada, the one-footed goat in the formation of cosmos. According to Vedic literature, deity Aja Ekapada denotes the unborn, transcendent cosmic energy. The goat is a docile, domesticated animal which gives milk and takes almost nothing for its own sustenance. However the role of Vedic deity is tremendous, he is infinite, an entity without motion and speech. Aja Ekapada is the unborn and worshiped as a form of Shiva and a transport vehicle of Agni, the god of fire.

According to Atharva Veda, Aja Ekapada is deeply connected with Rohit, another deity associated with cosmic evolution. The main job of Rohit was to produce heaven and earth where the thread of the sacrifice is extended. In this scheme of things Rohit was created and Aja Ekapada established himself as the Sun and made the heaven and earth firm with his strength. Aja Ekapada functions as the Sun which provides life and light and becomes a source which provides existence to the entire creation. In this scheme of things the role of Aja Ekapada is to cement this essence of manifestation. As a transport of Agni, fire which energizes all life forms Aja Ekapada takes the abstract image of Rohit, differentiates it, and then provides warmth and nourishment so that it can succeed in completing its journey.

Aja Ekapada, one of the early Vedic deities denotes the stage in cosmic evolution where fire has not taken an active role in creation, though the area of creation has been well-defined. The fire is still on the vehicle and has not been established as energy by itself. It is infinite and within it neither motion nor speech exists. The subject or objective attributes has not taken birth as yet. Manifestation cannot operate unless and until the polarization takes place and only then interplay of different forces start operating. Primarily Aja Ekapada is like a Sun which provides life and light to every form of creation but takes nothing itself. The same way the Lord Shiva in his cosmic dance arouses each and every cell and energizes the whole universe but within himself he is completely still and no activity is operating at any level.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Purva Bhadrapada's *Sattva*, harmony attribute predominates at primary and secondary level, however at the tertiary level it is *rajas*, activity. The primary motivation of the asterism is Arth, material prosperity. The basic impulse generated by the asterism is *sattva* and same is continued even at the next stage. This clearly indicates that soul is at the awakening stage and if proper guidance and support is provided then it has all the potential to be one with ultimate reality. The symbol of the asterism is sword which has a multi-faceted role to play. With the help of the sword one can win all the wars of the world and if a soul is on the higher plane then spiritual war can also be won with the sword. The sword can act as a double-edged weapon. It can make you warrior, martyr and sometimes it could be suicidal also. It will largely depend on the person who is using this weapon and with what intensity.

The primary motivation of the asterism is Arth, material prosperity. At the tertiary level *rajas*, activity impulse rules over it. When both these forces unite then there is every possibility that the mind of the individual will indulge in self-glorification

or satiating his senses. If one has taken that path then the spiritual growth will be stalled automatically and the person will get involved in sensuous and materialistic pleasures.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Purva Bhadrapada-Jupiter-Saturn combination is connected with cosmic solidarity and teaches the person fearlessness. You are blessed with creative intelligence and it reflects in your nature early in life. There is an unchannelled latent creative force which starts creating an entirely different persona out of you. There is an ever-changing process of impulses which manifests but remains abstract for quite sometime. There is a live force within that is eager to start its journey to reach the ultimate as soon as possible. Once you gain momentum in your mission, you are unstoppable till you achieve your objectives. In your sojourn, you do not want to break the rhythm. You want to make it a continuum process.

The Purva Bhadrapada-Jupiter- Jupiter makes you extremely passionate, spontaneous and idealistic. You are shy and undemonstrative in the beginning but gradually come to terms with life. You are focused and committed and make sure that whatever task you have is not left undone. Your primary motivation is materialism as you firmly believe that worldly comforts are essential to do something meaningful in this life. You are future oriented and make the best use of the present. You are humane and want to work for the upliftment of humanity. You are non-interfering in others' lives and also make sure that nobody intrudes in your personal affairs. You are confident and follow your own ideology which is different from others. You believe in karma (efforts) and leave no stone unturned to achieve your target.

Success does not come easily and you have a share of failures in the beginning. Every failure fills you with a new resolve and you make sure that the same is not repeated. It takes quite long for you to understand your rare potential and

once you have attuned yourself with the cosmic energy, you are unstoppable. You are quite a rebel and this helps you become a pathfinder for others. Your personality could be symbolized with a double-edged sword. When it is directed outwards, it can remove all sorts of obstacles which come in life. If it is the other way, it can be harmful. The real job of the sword is to ignite courage, provide perfect vision and help to unite all the disintegrated forces into a single unit. There is an inner urge in you to work with a missionary zeal to achieve your targets.

There is a desire to stand on your own, without any support and at times, it gives an impression of being eccentric and revolutionary. Perhaps you want to keep your originality intact which is why you do not heed the advice of others and adopt an attitude of 'couldn't care less'. There is a belief in you that you are already ahead of others and are fully capable of managing your show. The basis of this confidence is that you feel strongly connected with the universal force giving you the needed energy to achieve your goals without any interference. The complete self-reliance of the inner and outer force energy synchronizes so beautifully that every dimension looks easy and possible. The motivational force is so strong that it makes you believe that nothing will come in your way once you are focused. This attitude enables you to transform life in this birth itself.

Your Drawbacks: The negative side of your personality is that you are temperamental, restless and anxious. Your eccentric behaviour and acidic tongue can leave people aghast. Sometimes you could be too self-opinionated and over-idealistic in your principles. You can be very nervous and fearful if confronted by adverse situations. You need to work on your wavering and unstable mind.

Sometimes you become too individualistic and follow the path of materialism which could be termed fanatic and anti-social. If greed sets in you can fall from the path of grace. You need to curb anger, aggression and being over-passionate about

things of little consequence. Being too secretive, shrewd or irresponsible can cause a lot of pain and anxiety to you. Be wary of addiction and overindulgence in sex.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PURVA BHADRAPADA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a peaceful and comfortable place. Keep your neck and spine erect and close your eyes. Make sure your eyes remain closed throughout the 40 minutes of nakshatra meditation technique.

Before you start the exercise you must empty your lungs of air. Now start exercise with inhaling. You should inhale slowly and completely. Hold your breath as long as you can do easily. Bring your attention at the base of your spine, ie, at the Mooladhara Chakra. While you are holding breathe count 1, 2, 3 .... or you can recite a small mantra. Counting or mantra should be done mentally. Now start exhaling slowly and completely. After emptying your lungs hold your breath for the same duration as you have done earlier. Bring your attention at the top of your head, the Crown Chakra, and recite the same mantra or count. Repeat this exercise for 10 minutes while sitting in the same posture.

With this breathing exercise you will notice many changes taking place in your body and you will feel relaxed, energetic and rejuvenated. Be ready for the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture, breathe normally and drop the mantra. Bring your attention at the Mani Purak Chakra, ie, the navel chakra. You need to observe your body carefully. Bring your attention at the top of your head and start watching its shape, hair, forehead, eyebrows, eyes, ears, nose, cheek, lips, teeth likewise keep on going down up to your toes. You are watching your body externally as well as internally. Try to know the functions of your kidneys, how they operate. If you do not know much about the body, then take the help of an elementary book on

anatomy which will enable you to know every part of your body. During the process of watching your body you need to heal each and every part of your body with your pranic energy. Do this exercise for 10 minutes with total dedication.

Within few days you will notice that you know a lot more of your body and can heal it according to your choice.

Be ready for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture, breath normally and bring back your attention to the navel chakra. You need to observe the emotive side of your being. There are many emotional issues which we are capable of resolving then and there. However there are some complex issues which are never solved and become a stumbling block of our personality. You need to understand which are the areas of concern that still keep troubling you.

During these 10 minutes recall those situations and see the pros and cons and very soon you will find that you are done with those things or situations. If some situations are still haunting you then bow down to your deity and with his help you will be able to overcome the situations rather easily.

Be ready for the final stage.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture and bring back your attention to the navel chakra. Your eyes should remain closed. Just breathe normally.

Purva Bhadrapada is ruled by Aja Ekapada, the one-footed goat. It is bestowed with 'Yajamana Udyamana Shakti'. It gives the fire to raise a spiritual person up in life. On the heavenly plane what is good for all people and on the worldly plane what is good for the gods. Overall with these three causes the entire world is to be supported.

The presiding deity of your asterism is Aja Ekapada who is capable of producing and sustaining the life and light of the entire cosmos. That is the reason it is considered another Sun.

You can meditate on the eternal light which is capable of transforming everything on this earth. If you can connect well with your source of eternal energy then it has the capacity to take you into a new world altogether.

There are a few flaws in your personality which need to be ironed out. During *nakshatra* meditation technique you need to work on your being temperamental, restless, at times eccentric and self-opinionated attitudes.

Uttara Bhadrapada : (3° 20' — 16° 40' Pisces)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE NAKSHATRA

Uttara Bhadrapada is the twenty sixth asterism of the zodiac which extends from 333° 20' to 346° 40' and completely resides in the constellation of Pisces, ie, the fish. It consists of two stars. Purva Bhadrapada is also made of two stars and when they join together consist of four stars and represents the legs of a cot. But the two stars assigned to Uttara Bhadrapada are set to be symbolized as twins as well as the number two. The sign Pisces is ruled by Jupiter where as the asterism itself is ruled by Saturn. The presiding deity of the asterism is Ahir Budhnya, the dragon of the deep sea. The primary motivation of the asterism is *kama*, desire. *Sattva*, harmony attribute operates at primary and secondary levels but at tertiary level it is under the influence of *tamas*, inertia.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

The presiding deity of the *nakshatras* plays a very important role at the primordial stage of manifestation. All the deities of different *nakshatras* had to perform a particular function in the formation of cosmos and creation as such and they remain interconnected with each other at different angles and stages.

In the case of present deity Ahir Budhnya, the dragon of the deep sea is connected to Ahi-vritra, the dragon of primordial ignorance which hides himself in primeval darkness. These are known as dual principles of existence, ie, light and darkness,

heat and cold are emphasized by Aja Ekapada and Ahir Budhnya. Cosmic creation is based on these two fundamental principles of eternal conflict. They rule over fire and water, heat and cold and are personified by Agni and Soma. They are also known as two primary rudras which are known as manifestation of Lord Shiva. These two rudras are presenting the unity between Uttara and Purva Bhadrapada, are the four legs of the cot.

The sign Pisces is itself ruled by Jupiter whereas the asterism Uttara Bhadrapada is governed by Saturn. Jupiter and Saturn are poles apart from each other where character and tendencies are concerned. Jupiter being a benevolent planet believes in growth and expansion of the individual as well as the soul. Saturn is just contrary and represents the opposite of Jupiter. Saturn believes in constraints, curtailing, squeezing and putting a lot of trial and tribulation in the process of spiritual growth. Initially Saturn is a spiritual planet but it looks after the practical side of spiritualism. It believes that one cannot achieve oneness with the ultimate unless and until one goes through the path of penance, austerity and develops deeper understanding of humanity. The individual moves between the two basic polarized forces which constitute the universe and if it has to transcend this duality then he has to make a quantum leap to be one with the ultimate.

The deity of the asterism has a very deeper meaning. Ahi is a serpent, a demon and darkness personified. Due to this very darkness an individual remains ignorant even after taking many births on this planet. His bondage with materialism or ignorance is so deep-rooted that it does not get eliminated even after the suffering of many births. It is also believed even if the darkness of ignorance ends there still remains the darkness of wisdom. The symbol of asterism is dragon and all wisdom emanates from him through this *nakshatra*. It helps the individual to comprehend the knowledge hidden in all forms of manifestations.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

The basic and secondary attributes of the asterism are *sattva* but at the tertiary level predominating qualities are *tamas*, inertia. The primary impulse of the asterism is *kama*, ie, desire. The lord of the asterism is Saturn whereas the sign is ruled by Jupiter.

If we analyze then we find contradictory and opposite forces are equally posed against each other. The basic and secondary attributes are *sattvas*, harmony and the sign itself is ruled by benefic planet like Jupiter. All these render positivity. At tertiary level inertia qualities predominate, the primary impulse of the asterism is desire and Saturn rules over the asterism. It clearly indicates that one has to operate under extreme opposite circumstances. Due to this constant conflict one cannot decide how to proceed further for his own development and growth. Under these circumstances the role of deity Ahir Budhnya, the dragon of wisdom becomes eminent because all wisdom emanates from him through this asterism.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Uttara Bhadrapada-Saturn-Jupiter configuration gives rise to a very conflicting situation. There is an unfriendly atmosphere between Saturn and Jupiter or *tamas* and *sattva*, fire and water. The symbol also assigns a dual personality. You are capable of demonstrating quiet restraint and control over your aggression. Saturn, being a disciplined planet helps you control your feelings and provide self-control. Many a time you prefer to live with pain and agony than to exhibit it. There are two basic principles of cosmic evolution and they are governed by fire and water, heat and cold. That is the reason contradictory tendencies rule, because of the nature of the two planets Saturn and Jupiter. In the end, Jupiter takes over and you become cool, calm and understanding and the negativity of Saturn is left behind forever.

You put all your energy right from the beginning to establish yourself in whatever field you are. You work very hard and

prepare yourself for eternal rest where you are totally detached from material influence and try to attain internal peace. You exert a certain kind of discipline and self-control on your emotions and behaviour. You are quite cheerful, comfortable, kind and generous towards others. However your strong determination, resolve and persuasiveness enables you to reach your goals without much difficulty. There is a tremendous psychic ability in you which helps you throughout. You are caring towards your family, children and spread happiness wherever you are. You believe in giving freely without expecting anything back.

Your Drawbacks: The darker side of your personality could be passion and temper. You may be secretive, lazy, careless, irresponsible and cunning without any reason. Overindulgence in desire and some sort of addiction can create an upheaval in your life. Sometimes your ruthlessness can create a very dangerous situation for you. You need to cultivate patience and exercise utmost control on your negativity.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR UTTARA BHADRAPADA NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in a place which is comfortable as well as peaceful. Keep your spine and neck erect. Close your eyes throughout this 40 minutes of *nakshatra* meditation technique.

Before you start the exercise exhale completely. Now begin the exercise with inhaling slowly and fully. Hold your breath for as many seconds as you can do easily. Bring your attention at the base of your spine, ie, the first chakra and count 1, 2, 3 ... or any small mantra like Om. Exhale slowly and fully. Hold your breath at this stage for the same number of seconds as you have done earlier. Bring your attention at the top of your head, ie, the Crown Chakra and count or recite the mantra as per your choice. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes. After a few days

you will notice changes taking place in your body, changes for the better. You will be much more alert and active.

Be ready for the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): While sitting in the same position, bring back your attention at the Mani Purak Chakra or the navel chakra. Breathe normally and drop the mantra or counting. You need to connect very deeply with your external as well as internal body. Start this exercise from the head. Watch your hair, shape of skull, forehead, eyes, nose, lips, cheeks, ear, throat; likewise keep watching your body up to the toes. You can also observe your body internally as well. For instance you are watching the shape of your heart and its connection with the arteries and veins. At the same time pay attention to its rhythmic beat. While you are observing the different parts of your body keep on healing them also with your pranic energy. Do this exercise for 10 minutes and you will have a pleasant surprise to know that your body has become stronger as well as energetic. Be ready for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture, bring your attention to the navel chakra and breathe normally. You need to understand your emotional intelligence. If your emotional intelligence is perfect then you can handle any situation of this world. In this life it is very difficult to escape emotional trauma at various points of time. When you are at a good state of your emotional intelligence then nothing bothers you and you can overcome any situation within no time. However if you are a vulnerable sort and happen to be in such sort of situation which is difficult to deal with then emotional equilibrium gets disturbed. During these 10 minutes you need to work on those emotional issues which have been a source of tension and anxiety. Be ready for the next stage.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same

posture, breathe normally and bring back your attention on the navel chakra.

Your *nakshatra* Uttara Bhadrapada is ruled by Ahir Budhnya, the serpent of the depths of the atmosphere. It is blessed with a 'Varshodyamana Shakti'. It is endowed with the power of bringing rain. On the heavenly plane it is the raining of clouds and on the worldly plane it is growing of plants. From all these three factors the three worlds gain stability. The presiding deity is Ahir Budhnya, the dragon of the deep sea. It is also considered one of the eleven rudras of Lord Shiva. According to Vedic literature serpents are known for their absolute wisdom. You can pray to Naga, Shivalinga and directly to Shiva. If you connect with any of these sources of energy then you can liberate yourself from the process of life and death.

You also need to work on the darker side of your personality. Your impediments are temper, laziness, carelessness, cunningness and overindulgence.

Revati : (16° 40' — 30° 0' Pisces)

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *NAKSHATRA*

Revati is the twenty seventh and last *nakshatra* of the zodiac which consists of 32 stars in the Southern Tail of Pisces. It extends from 346° 40' to 360° 0' of the zodiac sign of Pisces ruled by Jupiter. The asterism itself is ruled by Mercury. According to mythological belief Saturn was born under this *nakshatra*. It is noted that Venus becomes exalted in this sign. The symbol of fish is assigned to the sign. The presiding deity of the asterism is Pushan, a name given to the Sun for measuring the sky. The symbol of the asterism is a drum or mridanga which is used for measuring time. *Sattva*s are the attributes of the asterism at all three levels. The primary motivation of the asterism is *moksha*, ie, liberation.

NAKSHATRA & ITS SHAPE

Revati *nakshatra* is considered a huge womb in which the Sun

remains dormant until the impulse for the next creative cycle begins. The lord of Revati asterism is Mercury who is the messenger of god to the human world and matter immerses here in the pure essence. It is also known as a Great Deluge where the seed for future creation incubate until the next cosmic dawn. Revati is also known as the wife of Balrama, elder brother of Lord Krishna. Revati functions in the realm where one cycle of evolution enters into completion and rest until the next beginning takes place. The fish is the symbol of the sign, an indicator of auspicious creative influence. Fish is known for fertility and rapid growth. A new life begins for an individual under this asterism. Due to the influence of this asterism a new cycle keeps on emerging while the old one ceases.

Revati is the twenty seventh and last asterism of the zodiac which also falls in the last sign of the zodiac, ie, Pisces. Most of the important planets are deeply connected with this sign and *nakshatra*. Sign Pisces is ruled by Jupiter which is considered the Jeevatma, the soul of humanity. Saturn was born in the asterism of Revati. Sun is the father of Saturn and Saturn was born to the mother Chhaya, the shadow of real wife of Sun ie, Sangya. Saturn is also known as the god of boundless time. The lord of Revati constellation is Mercury who gets debiliated in this sign indicating when the worldly logic and reasoning ceases to exist only then one can have a union with ultimate or when atma (soul) meets the parmatma (ultimate). Venus is the planet of procreation and gets exalted in this sign indicating when the one cycle of creation comes to an end then the second is ready to happen after a certain gap. The symbol of the sign is fish which is considered very auspicious. One of Lord Vishnu's avatar was of a fish, Matasya-avatar also indicates the beginning of a new cycle of evolution. The presiding deity of the asterism is Pushan, also known as nurturer. All these symbols are deeply related with this sign indicating the mystery attached with the sign which also indicates a subtlety of endless evolutionary cycle.

GUNAS & MOTIVATIONAL FORCE

Sattva attributes are operating at all the three levels. This is the first *nakshatra* of the entire zodiac where *sattva* attribute is predominating throughout. The universe is made of three attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and man is also a product of universe. He also has all three attributes equally. Harmony among all the attributes enables the process of manifestation and creation continues. The imbalance of attributes in a unit leads to many complications. However the excess of a particular attribute indicates the extremity in that area. For an instance when *tamas* is predominating all the levels then dullness, inertia, negativity will bring the motion down to the point of negation. Whenever *rajas* is operating at all the levels of manifestation then desire will have no limit and chaos will flood the environment. However when *sattva* will operate at all the levels then cessation of all kind of activities will take place and everything will come to a naught. This state could be compared with the Great Deluge where seed for future creation incubates until the next cosmic dawn.

NAKSHATRA TRAITS & PERSONALITY

Your Strengths: The Revati-Mercury-Jupiter configuration demonstrates gifted creative intelligence which helps to attain mastery in any chosen field. It looks as if some sort of divinity operates at an apparent level which is why achievement becomes just a matter of time, though necessary assistance is provided when the need arises. This combination also enables the fructification of nature's secret energies. One gets an impression of one evolution cycle being completed while the other is ready to begin. You are here to experience many changes almost at regular intervals which make your existence more vibrant and lively.

You are a born genius. You could be extraordinary in dance, music, literature and other forms of creativity. You are bestowed with abundant talent and growth that helps you in your sojourn of achievements. You like to protect your creativity as a mother

protects her child. Great wealth and material property come to you automatically, although there no craving for the same. Your sincere efforts never go waste. Your knowledge and wisdom helps you at every step and others admire it too. You are a constant support to your family, friends and peers and want nothing in return. You have energy similar to cosmic energy, which does not want to stop till the exploration is complete.

Your Drawbacks: The darker side of your personality is that you are quite temperamental. At times a feeling of inferiority or low esteem goes so deep in your system that it starts disturbing your equilibrium. Your over-sensitivity is the other cause of anxiety which invites unnecessary troubles. You so overdo generosity that you yourself become empty. You try to be co-dependent on others, which becomes a futile experience.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REVATI NAKSHATRA

First Stage (10 minutes): Sit down in any posture at a place which is most comfortable and relaxing. Keep your spine and neck erect. Close your eyes for the next 40 minutes and be ready for the exercise.

Before you start the exercise exhale completely, now begin the exercise by inhaling slowly and completely. Hold your breath for as many seconds as you can easily. Put your attention at the base of the spine, ie, the Mooladhara Chakra. Recite a small mantra or count while you are holding the breath. This recitation should be done internally. Exhale slowly and completely. Hold your breath and put your attention on the top of your head, ie, the Crown Chakra. Recite the mantra while you are holding your breath. Repeat this exercise for the next 10 minutes uninterruptedly. You will notice that your breath is rushing to another centre as soon as you release it. Within few days of this breathing practice you will notice that a lot of toxins of your body have come out and your body is more relaxed, light and vibrant. Be ready for the next stage.

Second Stage (10 minutes): Keep sitting in the same posture, breath normally and bring your attention at the Mani Purak, ie, the navel chakra. Observe your body very minutely and intensely from top to toe. Gradually bring your attention on the top of your head and start watching your hair and their roots connected to the skull, watch your skull from outside and inside and see how your brain looks. The same way keep on watching each and every organ of your body externally as well as internally. You are also advised to take the help of any elementary anatomy book to know more about your body. During these 10 minutes while watching your body keep on healing each and every part of your body with your pranic energy. If any part of your body is more troublesome then heal it more. If you do it for few days you will be amazed to know that your body has been healed in reality.

Be ready for the next stage.

Third Stage (10 minutes): Continue sitting in the same posture and bring your attention back on the navel chakra. You need to know emotional side of your being precisely, emotional intelligence of your personality. It has been observed off late that emotional intelligence is more important than the IQ of a person. Our life keeps on throwing all kinds of emotional challenges at us. Some of them can be tackled easily and some can become traumatic for a very long time. You need to see during these nakshatra meditation techniques do you also have any sort of issues with your emotional intelligence. Try to go deep into your subconscious mind and remove all those issues which hamper your progress. After the practice of few days you will find that you mind is more calm, peaceful and relaxed.

Be ready for the next stage.

Fourth Stage (10 minutes): While continuing in the same posture, bring back your attention at the navel chakra and breathe normally. The deity of your *nakshatra* is Pushan, the

nourishing form of the Sun god. Revati is blessed with 'Kshiradyapani Shakti'. It has the power of nourishment symbolized by milk. On the heavenly plane it is cows and on the worldly it is calves. These three bring about the nourishment of the entire world. Pushan is the presiding deity who is also known as Sun. During your nakshatra meditation technique you can pray to the Sun for your spiritual advancement. If you do not want to pray directly to the Sun then you can choose any god of your liking and try to be one with him. The only advice is when you are choosing any god of your liking then just imagine he is shining like the Sun while you are meditating on it. Gradually this energy will transform you once for all.

You need to work out on the darker side of your personality of being temperamental, inferiority complex, over sensitivity and too much dependence on others.

CHAPTER TEN

Shar-num

Synchronizing with the Universe

Shar-num is a Sanskrit word which has been derived from the root Sharan, which means to bow to somebody. If we translate *Shar-num* loosely it means if you prostrate yourself willingly in front of the person, deity or god whom you trust the most then he will uplift you instantly. This kind of *Shar-num* implies that when your ego is depleted to naught, when you are in a dire helpless state and all options are closed then you surrender. This kind of surrendering happens by forced circumstances. At this stage when the ego is punctured badly and survival is in jeopardy then one unwillingly surrenders to whom he thinks more potent. But as soon as status quo is revived, ego will come back into same form and this kind of surrendering makes no sense altogether as far as *Shar-num* is concerned.

New Technique

Shar-num is a new technique altogether and we need to ponder on this concept collectively. There is nobody else existing as far as Advait, non-duality is concerned. If man still feels he is separated from the source then it is because of his ignorance or Avidya. The moment that realization dawns upon him, man knows that he is part of the universe and there is no differentiation between him and the universe.

Man lives in duality and it is easy to understand generally because it looks convincing prima facie. The concept of Prakriti and Purush (Matter and Spirit) is derived from this understanding. However when one looks very closely or experiences the oneness, division automatically drops. *Shar-num* is a method which enables the individual to reunite with the universe with this new understanding.

Shar-num means that there is nobody other than you, then to whom does one surrender or do *Shar-num.*

Your existence is possible due to the whole or the universe. But due to ignorance or lack of knowledge it looks that you and the universe are two entities. Our dilemma is when there is no differentiation between the two then why don't they look one to all of us? If that is perceived reality then what could be the means which could unite this as one entity.

Shar-num Technique

We offer a simple technique and if it is done with eagerness then super connectivity can be achieved. This is a very simple technique which can be done with breathing. Inhaling and exhaling is a natural phenomenon and it does not take any effort of any kind. The existence of man is directly proportionate to his inhaling and exhaling. When you inhale, you say *Shar*, in your mind and when you exhale then you say *nam* in your mind. This exercise can be done anywhere or anytime during the entire day and night. *Shar-num* can be done while sitting, lying down, walking, watching, travelling, running, swimming or you can add more activities according to your need and imagination. If you do this for a while you will start connecting with the surroundings. Assuming you are walking in a park and mentally doing *Shar-num* with your breathing. As long as you inhale you synchronize the word — *Shar* with your inhaling and when you start exhaling then you synchronize the word — *nam* with your exhaling. Keep on doing this when you are walking and watching your surroundings in the garden. You will

see the grass and dew on it early in the morning and you suddenly start connecting with it. Although the grass is so small but very alive, vibrant and full of energy, it can compete singularly with any plantation on this earth. Similarly, you can connect yourself with a tree, its branches, the sky and everything around you. If you start connecting with the entire cosmos, stars and universe then you will notice that you and the universe are one and there is a divinity and no division as such.

Just close your eyes and start doing *Shar-num* with your breath. When you are inhaling, you are doing *Shar* and when you are exhaling you are doing *nam*. In the beginning there is no need to hold your breath, just go with the flow of your breathing pattern. Sometimes during this process you can try another simple technique. After inhaling or exhaling at any point just stop it all of a sudden. Hold your breath for a while and see what you are doing and if your mind was wavering at that time it will get reconnected with your inner self. Whenever your mind is agitated or you are worried about something and it is very difficult to cope with the surroundings, just start doing *Shar-num*. The total concept of your problem will be different. *Shar-num* can be done with open eyes and anywhere even in the midst of a crowd. If you do it in the midst of a crowd you will get connected with yourself very soon and feel alone and great. *Shar-num* can be done while your eyes are closed and you are about to sleep. Within no time you will feel relaxed, get a sound sleep and in the morning you will be fresh, lively as well as vibrant.

Aham Brahmasmi

Aham Brahmasmi — 'I Am That' is the ultimate word revealed by those who became one with the universe. Vedanta also reveals it and Advait, non-duality advocates 'I Am That'. It was very easy for those on the highest spiritual plane, who knew the truth to say *Aham Brahmasmi* — I Am That. The person who first declared *Aham Brahmasmi* was just revealing his identity.

It was just a humble statement from one who knew the ultimate — I Am That. Unfortunately this word is used by all of those people who have never known themselves and for them it was a borrowed word. Somebody else's realization cannot be yours. The inherent mechanism of this word is that it satiates the ego of any mortal who uses it. Therefore this word was misused by many, time and time again. As a matter of fact this word itself initiates from a point where ego has lost its identity but is used by those people who know nothing beyond ego.

So-hum

So-hum is a well-known technique by the great saint Adi-Shankeracharya. Shankeracharya was a great profounder of Advait, non-duality. He had re-established Vedantic philosophy around the 788 CE to 820 CE. It was a great method of Shankeracharya who had synchronized this with the breathing pattern. When man is inhaling it sounds like so and when he is exhaling it is Hum. Since breathing is a natural process therefore anybody can identify this word — *So-hum*. The word *So-hum* sounds very simple but that is not the case. It can be deciphered like this; that whatsoever you are, I am the same. In other words it is not very far from the word *Aham Brahmasmi* or 'I Am That'.

When this technique occurred to Shankeracharya it was rightly so because he had attained that stage where he had become *So-hum* or 'I Am That'. When a mortal recites this mantra without knowing who he is then ego is playing its role. It is just a revelation 'I Am That' but without really knowing what 'I Am That' really means. As a matter of fact this word was invented at an egoless state but misused by people, who operate only at ego level.

Ego & Mountain

India is a country where religion and spirituality have been studied and understood right from time immemorial. All the

ancient temples and pilgrimage sites are on the high places or mountains. As a mortal in this world it was the duty of an individual to go and visit at least one of those places in his life time. Ancient and present data reveals that most of people love to do so. That has been the practice for the last many centuries and is still going on.

It was not easy to reach these places because they were so high, places like some mountains. The passage of going there was not an easy one and it was a great effort for anybody to do so. However, human mind is such that mountains pose a challenge and invitation to both, athlete and pilgrims.

An athlete wants to climb the mountain because it challenges his ego and his spirit tells him to conquer it one day. Therefore he is willing to put his life at risk to conquer the mountain. When somebody asked Sir Edmond Hillary who was one of the first men to climb Mount Everest, what made him make such a valiant attempt, he with great modesty said, I climb mountains, because they re there.

The hidden meaning of keeping all the pilgrimage sites on difficult places where there is no easy access had a very spiritual meaning in it. When you are climbing a mountain without any external support, this strenuous exercise of climbing has a direct impact on your breathing pattern. You start breathing from your navel below the diaphragm. Whenever you start breathing from your navel and at the same time you are climbing then all the pores of your body start opening up, so do your cells. This process automatically put you in a state of *pranayam,* a yogic way of breathing. Due to the strenuous exercise you become one with the body in the beginning but your motive is to reach at a point or to meet your deity, god with whom you feel deeply connected within yourself. By the time you are approaching the pinnacle of your destination your body gives up and you know for sure that with this kind of tortured and ruptured body you cannot reach your destination or be one with your god. At that moment you surrender or you forget your body and only one

realization remains, that of your destination or to be one with your beloved or god and the next moment you find yourself over there.

It is true with the athlete also who starts a journey with his ego, knowledge, understanding and solid background. Just before the destination he also faces the same situation as the pilgrim faces and he has to surrender to conquer it and many athletes who have achieved, the non-achievable were of the opinion that it was not for them to do so without the support of hidden power.

Buddha's Technique

More than 30 years back I had visited an ancient monastery of Buddha. It was a unique experience of itself till date. While I was entering there I could see a huge tomb of the monastery. As I entered inside a huge wall and roof top of the monastery was echoing with the mantras rhythmically played — B*uddham Sharnam Gachchhami, Dhammam Sharnam Gachchhami and Sangham Sharnam Gachchhami*. After enquiring of the monk he told me the meaning of these three mantras. I feel one with the Buddha who got enlightened. I connect with the dharma, principle or honour which helps me to follow a chosen path and I bow down to the Sangha or group who will take care of me and protect me on the path of spiritualism. Barring the sound of these mantra everything else was soundless in that monastery. I had taken some offering with me which I passed on to the monk. After taking the offering from me the monk was bowing down at every step and standing up and again bowing down. In this process he had to cover almost 10 to 12 steps and on every step he was feeling oneness with the Buddham, Dhammam and Sangham. While watching him I forgot about my offering. I still remember very vividly the monk bowing down at every step and saying *Buddham Sharnam Gachchhami, Dhammam Sharnam Gachchhami* and *Sangham Sharnam Gachchhami*.

Shar-num is becoming one with the whole. *Shar-num* means

going back to the source. It is getting synchronized with the whole. Synchronizing is dropping your frequency of vibration and getting with frequency of the whole.

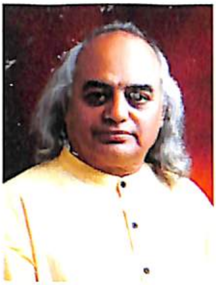
Ego and forms means having vibration frequency other than the vibration frequency of the whole.

A wave on the sea is nothing but a part of the sea vibrating with the frequency different from the frequency of the ocean.

Wave is tension — ocean is bliss. Wave subsides into sea — attains its frequency of vibration and becomes silent, becomes blissful. Meditation is journey — a long journey starting with process of concentration and ending with final union with the whole. NM is a humble attempt to give precise and specific direction of this journey.

Our technique is *Shar-num* and this can be done at any stage anywhere and without any restriction. Just do it yourself and see how it transforms you.

About the Author



Pandit Ajai Bhambi, who has been practicing astrology for 35 years, has taken up a novel method in meditation — *nakshatra* meditation. In his book 'Planetary Meditation', he discusses groundbreaking aspect of spiritual astrology with practical value and usage.

A healer in the Himalayan Yogic *parampara*, he has gained mastery over astrology which combines a deep understanding of life. He has written several books — Vedic Sun Signs, *Manavta Ka Ekmatra Mitra Shani*, Be Your Own Astrologer, Vaastu For You & Your Family. He also writes for newspapers, periodicals and features in TV shows across India.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

'Planetary Meditation' explains in simple terms how planetary positions shape our lives thereby enriching us with knowledge, peace and wisdom. It explores *nakshatra* meditation — a meditative technique never explored before — that connects with the deity of the *nakshatra* one is born in to attain *sat-chit-ananda*. This book is not only a good read but also a guide to spiritual journey and personal growth. Worth a buy for those who think it is crucial to devote time from the daily grind of life to peace and spirituality.

A remarkable exposition of the relationship between astrology and cosmic design. In a very absorbing manner astrology has been discussed with reference to a spatio-temporal-consciousness continuum which reflects the author's deep understanding of the subject.

Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, MP and ex-Union Minister

'Planetary Meditation' will help millions of people to improve life and give happiness. Shri Ajai Bhambi is a real scholar on astrology. This book will also help the new generation to understand Indian culture, tradition, values and meaning of life. Best Wishes.

Alok Mehta, Editor-in-Chief, *National Duniya*

Published, Marketed & Distributed by

Times Group Books

A division of
Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd.

www.tgb.indiatimes.com

ISBN 978-93-80942-89-6

9 789380 942896

₹299

ZODIAC SIGNS

SYMBOL	SIGN	PAGE
Aries - A	♈	38
Taurus - B	♉	41
Gemini - C	♊	46
Cancer - D	♋	52
Leo - E	♌	57
Virgo - F	♍	62
Libra - G	♎	65
Scorpio - H	♏	69
Sagittarius - I	♐	73
Capricorn - J	♑	79
Aquarius - K	♒	85
Pisces - L	♓	89

Zodiac signs given here correspond to page numbers mentioned in the book.